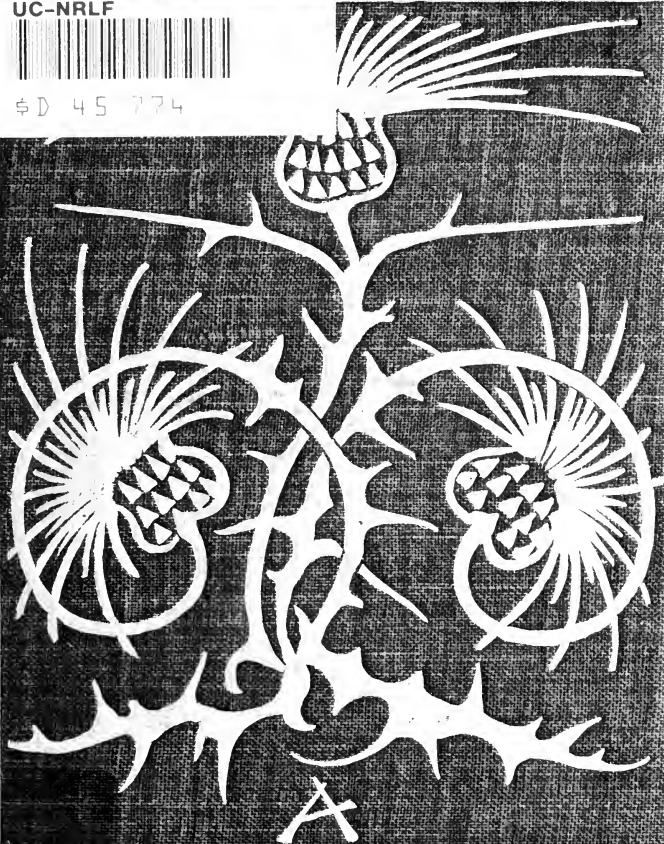


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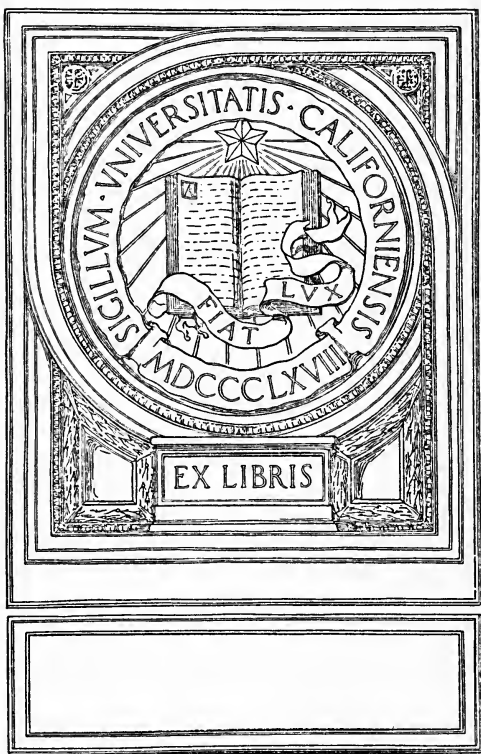


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BORDER SHEPHERDESS

AMELIA. E. BARR



A BORDER SHEPHERDESS

A ROMANCE OF ESKDALE

BY

AMELIA E. BARR

AUTHOR OF "JAN VEDDER'S WIFE," "A DAUGHTER OF FIFE,"
"THE BOW OF ORANGE RIBBON," "THE SQUIRE
OF SANDAL-SIDE," ETC., ETC.

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INDEX.

CHAPTER.	PAGE.
I. TILBERT AND TERRES GRAEME, . . .	I
II. HARRIBEE HOME,	16
III. THE ENTRANCE OF SORROW, . . .	36
IV. THE WILL OF GOD,	57
V. ARCHIE RENWICK'S HEART, . . .	74
VI. LORD GRAEME'S LOVE,	94
VII. TERRES AND FAITH,	114
VIII. FAITH'S DARK HOUR,	130
IX. THE WAY ARCHIE WENT,	147
X. THE HOUR WILL COME,	167
XI. A LATE WEDDING,	186
XII. YOUNG LIVES IN HARRIBEE, . . .	211
XIII. RIGHT BEFORE EVERYTHING, . . .	234
XIV. A FATAL HUNTING PARTY, . . .	251
XV. AT FAITH'S MERCY,	271
XVI. THE CAPTAIN AND THE MINISTER, .	291
XVII. CONTENT.	308

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A BORDER SHEPHERDESS.

CHAPTER I.

TILBERT AND TERRES GRAEME.

“ Away to the bonnie green hills
Where the sunshine sleeps on the brae,
And the heart of the greenwood thrills
To the hymn of the bird on the spray.
Away where the sky shines clear,
And the light breeze wanders at will,
And the dark pine wood nods near
To the light-plumed birch on the hill.”

PROF. BLACKIE.

EVERY one has heard of Hawick, of its fine manufactures, its outspoken liberals, and its quick-footed poachers. But who in this generation remembers Mosskirtle, an old resting-place of the Carlisle and Edinburgh coaches on the same high road? For the railway has left it some miles on the other side, and thus consigned its comfortable inn to oblivion, and the little town itself to the primitive condition of the last century.

Yet Mosskirtle is the entrance to a district rich in natural beauty and local tradition—the gateway to the “Land of Spearmen,” to the homes of the moss-troopers and the tak’ing men of Eskdale, Liddisdale and Teviotdale; border riders who loved their Jeddart lances and heavy swords, and who were emphatically what our fathers called “men of their hands.”

This ruffling element kept possession of the borders until nearly two centuries ago. Then the Covenanting martyrs sought refuge among their mountains and mosses, and it was these “chased and tossed men” who first brought “the Riders” to reason and to religion. They had remained Roman Catholic longer than the rest of the lowlands; Catholics without faith, without respect for faith, and full of superstition; but the prescribed and hunted Richard Cameron, Peden, and Balfour, preached righteousness to them so effectually that a national poet of the day complains:

“If their doctrines should get rooting,
Farewell theft, the best of booting!
For instance, lately on the Borders,
Where there was naught but theft and murders,

These rebels more prevail with words,
Than dragoons do with guns and swords ;
So that their simple preaching now,
Makes the rush bush to keep the cow,
Better than Scots or English kings,
Could do by kilting them in strings." *

And as the doctrines did get rooting, the moss troopers became honest shepherds and farmers, stern and uncompromising moralists, men ready to die for their faith, yet possessing a character singularly marbled with veins from anterior lives altogether diverse—daring, poetical, not devoid of superstition—for it takes centuries to wear out traits that have been growing for centuries ; since over the larger part of every generation may be written, "what the cradle rocked, the spade buried."

Civilization indeed advanced very slowly in these lonely valleys. Only forty years ago, a cart came out of Selkirk three days in the week, traversed the district and went back on the alternate days ; and upon this cart, the people depended for their mail, and for such necessities of life as their own farms did not supply. But the wheel hummed then on every hearth, and the women's fingers deftly threaded the

shuttles, and sent them flying to their own pleasant clickity-clickity music. So the world beyond the dales, and the waters troubled them very little; they traveled life's common way in cheerful godliness, in peace, in the innocence of a pure religion, and a simple pastoral life.

Still the type of any community has its variations; it runs back, it turns aside, it anticipates. There were cattle drovers in Mosskirtle who were only the cattle lifters of the seventeenth century under the restraints of the nineteenth century. In many a moorland farm the dour enthusiasm and the unflinching principles of Richard Cameron still dwelt. The straitest bands of Calvinism hardly restrained in others the transmitted love for adventure. Liling Border songs sprang naturally to their lips, songs that went spontaneously to the gallop of horses, and the jingling of spurs and spears. For who ever listened to "*Oh Kenmuir's on an' awa' Willie*," without longing to mount and galop by Kenmuir's side? So then, the singers took to a horse like gypsies and loved dearly to shake the bridle free, and in a mad galop find the Solway moss, and the Solway Firth, and the little black smacks that

brought French brandy and tea from the Isle of Man where they could be run in free of duty.

Physically, they have always been a fine race. From Eskdale to Annandale, men of the most colossal and stately figures Britain has to show were plentiful. The women also were generally handsome, and here and there lovelier faces could be met than one could ever hope to see again : fresh as the dawn, with an expression of wondering innocence that was charming. And in this lonely land, as in the busy highroads of life, there were human beings defying all classification ; faces that, even in youth, had the atmosphere of measureless antiquity ; tempers that compelled speculation as to whether " possession " was not even at this day a fact.

Such were Lord Tilbert Graeme and his sister, Terres. They had come shrieking into the world together, and their mother's life had been the price of their existence. Left, then, to the care of servants for many years, they had ruled them with the unreason of passionate childhood. In youth they were seldom apart, and both alike were restless and unhappy, when circumstances compelled such an arrangement. And yet their daily intercourse with each other

was frequently marked by dissensions whose violence terrified every one but themselves. Neither had married, although Lord Graeme was reputed a gallant, and Miss Terres had certainly had many lovers.

She was still a woman of perfect form and fine coloring; one that would have satisfied fully the usual conception of a noble lady fit to be the mistress of Graeme Castle. It was a very ancient place, and one of unusual size and magnificence for the Scotch marches, whose great families had generally preferred to defend themselves in their forests and fens, rather than build strongholds which might be taken from them by the English, and then used as a means of coercing their obedience. But the Graemes had been almost hereditary wardens of the country; they were royal favorites; they were unscrupulous with foes or friends; they were reckless with money and life, and they had never yet found the time when their hands or their tongues could not keep the home which the first Lord Tilbert Graeme had built on the banks of Esk Water.

It stood upon a great rock overhanging the river. All the approaches to it were steep

and stony and shagged with wood; but from its walled court-yard the dwellers within could see all the bleak, bright aspects of the border uplands—the hanging woods, the broomy braes, the heathery hills melting away into that charming haze which envelopes the Cheviots with its faint blue mantle.

The interior had all the magnificence, the littleness, and the inconveniences of ancient ideals. There was one grand hall nearly eighty feet long, lofty and wide in proportion, ceiled with carved and polished woods, having in its walls one hundred and forty panels, each containing the likeness of some Graeme, male or female. But these portraits were mostly rude attempts to preserve faces full of sorrows or of sins. A gentle soul would have looked back with terror to such an ancestry; a pious one would have prayed that the future might be delivered from it.

With the exception of this stately apartment, the rooms were small and cheerless, for the great space inclosed was much broken by sixteen staircases, full of ascents and descents; and the windows were high and narrow, and the doors iron-cased, so that the appearance of

the rooms was more prison-like than any habitation of man ought to be. Terres Graeme had been sensitive to it from her earliest recollection ; sometimes it saddened her, sometimes it irritated her, but she was rarely able to ignore its influence.

On one May evening, A. D. 1840, as she came slowly down the main stairway, the feeling terrified her. For that very reason, she walked deliberately, taking each step with a conscious effort. Her long silk robe trailed on the steps behind her, and she fancied she heard, above its rustling, footfalls at once stealthy and fearless. Once she turned around and looked boldly into the shadows she had passed, then with set lips she resumed her descent. As she did so, two servants began to close the doors. They were heavy, with iron bands ; they moved on ponderous hinges, and had massive bolts, and their clash and clangor echoed far down the winding passages.

It was impossible for her any longer to defy the feeling of terror. She hastened to the hall door, still standing open, and gazed outward with a sigh that was almost a sob. In the last slanting rays the crows were hurrying silently

to their nests, and the black-faced moorland sheep, moving restlessly from hillock to hillock, were beginning to crowd together for the night. It was a mournful, misty, lonely world outside, and with a shiver she turned from it into a small parlor where there was a blazing fire of coals above a hearthstone of white tiles.

Lord Tilbert was later than usual, seeing that there was neither market, nor meeting of any kind to detain him. But Miss Terres neither wondered or feared at his absence. Graeme of castle Graeme was not one of those men whom women have little anxieties about, or to whom small services of affection are naturally offered. But she wanted his society to restore her courage. She had met very unexpectedly a very lonesome hour. Images from the past came streaming over her head. She was surrounded by a silent company that terrified her, that asked her dumb questions she could not answer. And she shrank from such soul interrogatories. The present moment was often hard enough to Terres Graeme, but when the hardest moments of all her past years came crowding into it, each one importuning for regrets or remem-

brance, it was too much to bear, especially in that solemn witching owl-light time.

So when at last she heard her brother's footsteps she was glad, and she rose like one who throws off an evil dream, and snuffed the long wicks of the candles, and stirred into a brighter blaze the great blocks of soft coal. Then Lord Tilbert entered the ruddy light and his dark face and figure was like a shadow in it.

"I am so glad to see you, Tilbert."

He nodded appreciatively and came with slow and heavy steps toward the fireside. He had removed his hat and cloak, and the man stood fairly enough revealed in the light. He was not handsome, but he had an original face of much character, and a figure of great strength, tall, thick set, deep-chested. His eyes were of yellowish brown set in bistrous lids, and they seemed to lie in wait, and watch behind *cache-nez* glasses. No one could doubt that he was capable of red-hot passion, perhaps even of letting it run away with him, but his usual manner was quietly dogmatic, wary, perceptive, cool. Terres had long known that if there were any feeling in her heart, she need

hardly be at the trouble of confessing it ; he was sure to find it out.

He loved money, and influence, and he was a jealous guardian of his own interests ; and yet there was something in his deepest nature that responded instantly to whatever was poetic or mystical. This disposition is however far more common than is generally supposed ; and if spiritual men may be counted by thousands, men who are indifferent to the spiritual element but fascinated by the occult and supernatural, may be counted by tens of thousands.

A servant followed immediately with the supper tray. There was a bottle of wine and cold meat for the lord, and for Miss Terres her invariable glass of mulled Burgundy and a few strips of toasted bread. He was so quiet that his movements scarcely broke the air of repose suggested by the motionless attitude in which the brother and sister sat gazing into the fire. Even after he had closed the door, and they knew they were quite alone, Lord Tilbert continued his meditation, and it was Miss Terres who made the first movement, and the first remark.

"After the mist, a glass of wine is a good thing, Tilbert."

Then he rose and filled a goblet and drank it at a draught.

"But will you not eat?"

"I have no mind to."

"Then there is something wrong. What is it?"

"It is Faith Harribee. Terres, I must marry the girl one how, or other."

"As for marrying Faith Harribee, it is high time you knew that to be beyond thinking of."

"Why?"

"If you stood alone in the universe, without a kinsman behind you—if you had no sister at your side—if you had no obligations before you you might then ask why. Carry your question into the great hall, and ask it there, Tilbert."

"What have the dead to do with it?"

"The dead are not those who have ceased to live. In a few years you and I will be as they are. Even now, as I talk to you, my flesh shivers and is conscious of presence. Possibly they hear me pleading for their honor."

"I love the girl."

“And so I loved Will Foster. I gave him up to please you. You know what I suffered. It was a heart-shipwreck in which I lost my love, my youth, my hope, my faith. Only you remained to me. We two have one life. At the long end, you will find that out.”

“I must marry sometime, I suppose;” and he looked keenly at Terres, who was sitting with dropped eyes and a face half-angry and half reproachful. The question touched a point to which they never alluded in the faintest way. It startled Terres, and she remained silent.

“I know of what you are thinking, Terres.”

“Then you know I am thinking of——the boy. Had you forgotten him?”

“No, by heaven! I wish I could forget him. Are you going to put him before me?”

“When I cease to love you, I may do so; not until. The thing that is done, is done. Why do you call the question up now? Concerning evil, it is not well even to whisper.”

“But whenever I marry it must come up. Between you and me, it must come up, Terres.”

“Until then, I will not speak of it. I will not speak of it at all. Only remember this—

not for Faith Harribee, will I meet my brother William with my hands before my face."

"Is that a threat, sister?"

"It is a truth."

"What do I care for that? You will stand by me, as you have always done—*or*!"

"Your threat ought to choke you. I can say '*or*' as loud as you can. Keep mind of that fact—and I would advise you to be more cautious."

"Caution behind my back!"

"Better keep it by your side. It is often wasted, but it is a good risk to take."

"The girl is my destiny."

"Simple nonsense! The clew of every one's destiny lies at the cradle foot. You know what your birth binds you to. A man can not deliberately make his own fortune and then call it fate. I have heard also, that Archie Renwick of Shepherd's Bush was wooing Faith Harribee."

"Lies! Idle tales from women, who have nothing else to do but go from house to house, spinning street webs."

"Indeed I heard he had bespoken her."

"Nothing but a who-say—a wandering word with no truth in it."

“Still where the rings are spread, a stone fell into the water. But if you must marry why not Helen Lilburn? She likes you, and she has houses and lands in her own right.”

“I love Faith Harribee ; and I care nothing for houses and lands in an apron-string-hold. I want my property in my own hand, not my wife's. In short, I want Faith.”

“You want Faith ! Very well, that is your affair. I don't want Faith ! That is my affair. You are riding a dangerous road to woo ; before you mount, look to your girth, Sir: ” and with a movement of scorn and defiance she left the room ; the thick, glistening silk of her robe, seeming to rustle in angry sympathy, with her heart's turmoil, and anxious apprehension.

CHAPTER II.

HARRIBEE HOME.

“ Their free-bred soul
Went not with priests to school,
To trim the tippet and the stole
And pray by printed rule.
But they would cast the eager word
From their heart's fiery core,
Smoking and red, as God had stirred
The Hebrew men of Yore.” PROF. BLACKIE.

“ The world which seems
To lie before us like a lands of dreams
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor pace, nor help for pain ;
And here we are, as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight.”

HARRIBEE Home was about three miles from Castle Graeme ; a long gray house of rough granite, with a high roof of red tiles, green and yellow with lichens. In front of it, there was an old-fashioned terraced garden, shaded by sombre yew trees and divided through the center by wide grass-grown steps. A strip

of rich land lay between the garden and Esk water, and on this spring evening it was all a mist of green with growing corn. But behind the house, and "up the waters" was the vast and desolate places of the shepherds; a great silent table-land of heather and turf, seamed here and there with a green valley, or broken by the catrail—that mysterious wall and boundary of an unknown race—while on the horizon, blue and afar off, were the distant mountains that ringed around this "land of the leal."

The house itself was only remarkable for the rude strength of the age in which it was built. Its rooms were all composed of massive stone, and heavy beams and boards of oak, and with closed doors and windows it was capable of being long defended. For before the days of Richard Cameron the Harribees had been noted riders, and their blue bonnets over the English border had meant for the Cumberland or Westmoreland shepherds inevitable scaith and loss. But with the persecuted preachers a new spirit entered the house, and the grim gray keep, that had been so long the gathering-place of wild and lawless men, became a safe rendez-

vous and resting-place for the hunted saints. For the Harribees were men of whole minds; whatever cause they espoused it was theirs, for hands or purse, for life or death.

They had never been counted of noble birth, though as moss-troopers they had held that pre-eminence which among fighting men is ever awarded to personal strength and bravery.

“On the borders were the Harribees, able men,
Very unruly, and very ill to tame,

had been truly enough said of them until the words of the preachers found them out. Then they had exchanged raiding and riding for a leadership in the ranks of those iron apostles whom God sends in iron times to prepare His way.

On all the slopes around Harribee Home they had stood with the Covenanting men, joining heartily both in their solemn chant and their startling war-cry. They had left men at Airs Moss, at Drumclog, and Bothwell Brig. Dunnottair's dungeon solitude had heard their prayers, and the Bass Rock attested their long suffering. Nor was their struggle only a brightly barren one. A single death for truth and freedom makes millions the heritors of

truth and freedom, and the men who achieved through martyrdom an independent creed gave to the pastoral Pentland falls, the Lothian plains, and the dales of the border, the noblest of all claims to renown:

“God’s saints died here and gained the martyr’s crown.”

But in worldly matters also the Harribees were not unprosperous. They possessed within the butts and bounds of their estate a thousand acres of land without a due upon it; mostly under cattle and sheep, but growing in the lower and more sheltered valleys sufficient grain and grass for the wants of the farm.

Early in the present century Matthew Harribee came into his heritage. He was the son of David Harribee who had followed Cumberland’s troopers to Culloden. Not without a pang had he drawn his sword against his native prince, but the Stuarts were the enemies of his faith, and “Jerusalem which is above,” was the native land of his soul. Between religious conviction and national prejudice, David Harribee could not have a moment’s hesitation. Still he thanked God that his son Matthew’s life had fallen in pleasanter and more peaceful times; for when he gave up the farm to him

persecution was over, liberty of conscience assured, the Stuart dynasty—source of so much woe—nothing but a passionate remembrance.

However, Matthew was heir to the nature and traditions of his family, as well as to their house and land. He was a stern man, living under circumstances when sternness was not the quality most desirable. Every one respected, though few loved him ; but Matthew Harribee was not a man whose happiness depended upon popular estimation. To do his duty and be at peace with his own conscience were more to him than the doffing of bonnets on the roadside or the “cracking” of friends at his ingle.

He did not marry until his father's death made him master of Harribee, and he was then nearly forty years of age ; so that people wondered greatly when Maggie Renwick, a timid, gentle woman, frail and lovely as a Cheviot blue-bell, chose him from among handsomer and richer suitors. But Maggie made no mistake. Her heart divined that Matthew, though but a silent wooer, loved her with an intensity and depth for which earth has no language and time no measure.

They had many children, but the majority

inherited their mother's delicate frame and died early. Two daughters only had reached womanhood, and it was upon the eldest, the fair and stately Faith Harribee, that Lord Tilbert Graeme had set his heart. Agnes, her sister, was but a lassie of seventeen, a bonnie lassie, every one called her, unable to find any other term to express their sense of a beauty more easily felt than described.

Between Agnes and the babe, yet in his mother's arms, there was a wide interval, bridged only by the small green graves in the kirk-yard. But this babe was the darling of the house. He had come as the recompense for so many. He was the only living son, the heir to the house, and land, and name. Matthew Harribee's fondest hopes were in him, and for him. A boy-child had always been greatly valued in the dales, and this was a sturdy little fellow, calm and wide-eyed, with the peculiar square, strong countenance, which Matthew in his heart, proudly recognized as the Harribee face.

On that spring night on which Miss Terres Graeme sat lonely in Graeme Castle, haunted by memories she would gladly have put far from

her, Agnes Harribee was rocking this babe to sleep. He lay in his wooden cradle and Agnes knelt by his side, gently swaying it, to the song she sang—a simple, rather plaintive little ballad—but the child seemed to like it. He gazed at her with round, wondering eyes, and made a low, chirring, continuous sound, that blended very sweetly with the rustic words and melody :

“ Braw, braw, lads on Yarrow braes,
Ye wander thro’ the blooming heather,
But Yarrow braes, nor Ettrick shaws
Can match the lads of Galla Water.

“ But there is ane, a secret ane ;
Aboon them a’ that I love better,
And I’ll be his, and he’ll be mine,
The bonnie lad o’ Galla Water.”

“ *Whist !* ” Agnes, dearie. Your fayther doesna like thae sangs. I wonder whar you learnt them at a’ ? I wonder at your singing them ! ”

“ I wonder mysel’, mither, sometimes. They’re down i’ my heart someway, and afore I ken they are at my lips, and out by them.”

“ Is the bairn asleep ? ”

“ Ay, he’s o’er the border line, God bless him ! ”

“ Then lay the supper cloth, and tell Kirsty to bring in a basket o’ peat and a bit o’ bright

wood for the fire. Your fayther will be cold and hungry when he gets down the fells."

"He is late the night."

"Ay, he is late. There are a good many ewes and lambs to fold, and he doesna trust the hired shepherd."

"I'll soon hae a' ready, mither. Sit down and rest yoursel' a wee. You are aye working."

"Weel, that is right, Agnes. Folks must work to-day, for there's nane can tell hoo far they may be hindered to-morrow. Quick, my lassie! I hear your fayther's voice in the barn-yard."

In a few minutes Matthew Harribee entered the house-place. There was a flicker of light on his grave face as he came within the pleasant influence of the cheerful ingle, and the calm eyes lifted with a silent welcome to meet him. But he did not speak at once, and no one dreamed of interfering with his thoughts.

Presently his eyes rested on the sleeping boy and his face softened. The sweet sense of human love gave him the desire for human sympathy, and he said:

"It was vera raw and damp on the fells, and I am gey tired tramping after the ewes. They're

wilfu', silly creatures—the prophet kent us weel when he said, we a' went astray like sheep, ilka ane turning his ain way. It is a true observe. Isaiah would hae been amang the sheep faulds himsel', nae doubt, nae doubt."

"You are a gude shepherd, Matthew, and you are a kind man to the beasts. I heard ye in the stable and the barn-yard."

"Ay, I like to see they hae their supper. Evening oats are good morning fodder; and the servant's hand may do, if the master's eye is on it. Noo, I'll hae my ain bite and sup, for I hae a word or twa to say after it. Ca' the lasses in, Maggie. Hae you seen Faith within the hour?"

"Faith is in the dairy. The wark is late to-night, for she went o'er to Kirtle Farm to get a few cuts o' fine yarn for me. She didna get back as soon as she should hae done, and there's a sight o' milk now, gudeman. So she is a bī behind-hand to-night."

"Ay, I thocht that."

"But I hear her footfalls—" and with these words Faith Harribee entered. She had on her dairy dress, a striped linsey petticoat, and a calico josey, with the sleeves fastened above

the elbows. But no one who looked at Faith thought of her dress. Whatever she wore seemed to be precisely the fitting garment for her, for her figure was so fine, her countenance so brave and bright, her manner so calm, that she inspired at once a sense of strength, and pleasure, and sweet fitness for the occasion.

Yet her mother, who knew every light and shadow of her daughter's face, perceived, or perhaps felt, that something unusual was on Faith's mind. Still she did not connect it with the "word or twa" Matthew Harribee had forespoken, until he said,

"If the day's work is o'er, sit down, lasses. Faith, I hae a question to ask you. How lang hae ye been keeping tryste wi' yonder black lord o' Graeme?"

"Never ance hae I kept tryste with him, father. He met me to-night on Kirtle brow, and he lighted from his horse, and spake some words to me I didna want to hear."

"I thocht that. I was on the Preacher's Stane aboon you, and though I couldna hear his words, I kent weel the meaning o' Graeme's doffing his beaver, and bending his proud head

to a bonnie lassie's face. I kent weel what lying flatteries and beguiling words he was saying; and his outstretched hand, ringed wi' diamonds, and gloved wi' kid-skin, I kent weel what way it would lead a silly lass that heeded him."

"I heeded no word he said. And you should think better of Faith Harribee than to misdoubt her. Graeme asked me to marry him, plump and plain, he asked me to marry him, and I said that was a thing that never could be."

"It was a great honor to you, Faith," said the mother timidly, and a little flush of pleasure stole into her white cheeks.

"You ken naething o' what ye are saying, gude wife;" and Matthew turned almost fiercely on the offending speaker. "If Beelzebub sought you for a mither-in-law, would you mince and mou, and say it was a great honor? Yet diels and bad men are kith and kin, and they think the same thochts, and do the same warks. Wha ever kent a gude Graeme? The sins o' a' their generations are on them. They were fause to baith Scots and English, Stuart and German, and they keepit

their heads and their lands by lying and bribery. They were with the brutal Dalzell and Claverhouse against the saints, and their blood is on the doorstep o' Castle Graeme, and on the hands o' its lords ; for the present lord has justified his fathers in my ain hearing, and said he would hae done sae, and mair too, had he lived in their day. I dinna doot it, not a minute's space. Sae speak nae mair to him, this nor that, and gie him neither your hand nor your good-day."

"You hae been ceevil to him yoursel', Matthew, and you hae bought and sold with him."

"There's a difference, a vera great difference, atween selling a few ewes or a bull-calf to a man, and gieing him your ain daughter, the bairn you pledged to God in baptism, and that was saved by the blood o' the Holy One. Faith Harribee is of the seed o' the saints and the martyrs. It would be even down sin to give her to a Graeme!"

"I wouldna gie mysel' to him, fayther; though maybe I dinna think sae badly o' him as you do."

She spoke with a grave and quiet decision,

and Matthew felt a little shame over his unusual and uncalled-for excitement. His voice fell into its ordinary tones, and he answered, "I believe you, Faith; so there is nae mair to be said on that head, and we'll settle our hearts wi' a thocht or twa frae God's Book. Gie it to me, and ca' ben the lads an' lasses."

They came sleepily in, tired with their hard outdoor labor, and feeling "the exercise" to be just a little trial. But as soon as Matthew opened the volume and said,

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," the familiar illustration went straight to each comprehension; and with patient bovine faces, on which there was a glimmer of expectation, they looked straight at the master.

"My shepherd!" he said, "like as if the Lord had only one sheep and that sheep was you, or you, or me." Then he read the whole psalm through, and added, "Sandy, you and I and Baldy ken weel what silly things sheep are, and what a hard time we shepherds do have wi' them. They're always in trouble, the heat parches them, and the cold freezes them, and the snow smoors them, and the dogs worry them, and the flies are death to them. And

just such a worrisome flock the Lord has here in Harribee Home, but He *is* a shepherd. He says we shall not want. We are to lie down in green pastures and by still waters. You ken vera weel that sheep dinna lie down if they are hungry, or if the torrents are roaring down the fells; sae you can understan' that you are promised baith plenty and safety. Sae gang to your beds and sleep in peace, for there's naething to fear you, wi' such a shepherd—and it willna do you any harm, my lads, if you'll keep mind hoo the Lord tak's tent o' his sheep, and ever try to do your ain sma' duties a bit better the morn. Gude-night, and the Lord be wi' you all."

But though thus pleasantly dismissed to sleep, Faith and Agnes did not readily feel able to accept the blessing. Faith perceived that something unpleasant was influencing her sister. She sat, almost sullenly combing her long yellow hair, and there was undoubtedly a rebellious expression upon her usually happy face. And as Agnes was ever ready to talk upon passing events, Faith was astonished at her silence regarding the Graeme's proposal. She did not care to open the subject herself,

but she was quite ready to give her confidence to her sister, if Agnes desired it. And she could not help glancing with a curiosity in which there was a slight feeling of offense, at the companion who affected so little interest in a circumstance singular and unexpected.

But though Faith lingered somewhat about her preparations for the night, Agnes sat in the same dour attitude, mechanically passing the comb through her loosened hair, but evidently unmindful of what her hands were about, and indifferent to every thing but the gloomy and resentful thoughts she was indulging.

At last Faith said, "I'm no caring to wait all night for you, Agnes. Why dinna you come awa' to your bed?"

Agnes answered in a low passionate burst of weeping. She laid her arms upon the small dressing-table, buried her face in them, and sobbed with a provoking unreason.

"I'll hae to go for mother, Agnes, if you willna tell me what is troubling you. You shouldna be keeping folks waking with a fear you can lighten by a word. Wha is there that loves you as I do? And wha would do mair

to pleasure you in a' lawfu' ways? What ails you at a', Agnes?"

She had come to her side, and she stooped to the weeping girl whispering her name softly with those little soothing intonations, the strong involuntarily use toward the weak.

"I am meeserable, Faith. Fayther's words against the Graeme have maist broken my heart."

Faith's face flushed crimson as she asked, "has he been saying foolish things to you, also, Agnes? Never mind him, dearie, we baith ken, that he is naught at a' but a bad man."

"Oh! You are aye thinking o' yoursel', Faith! What do I care for the Graeme? I hate the vera sight o' him. A hard, cauld uncle is he to poor Roland!"

"Roland! Poor Roland! Agnes, Agnes, I hope you are na heeding Roland Graeme! That would be worse than a'."

"Why would it be worse than a'? Roland has been coming to Harribee ever since he was ten years auld."

"Tak' care o' yourself, Agnes, and dinna say too much. When the lad first came to the castle, a poor motherless, fatherless, friendless

bairn, and not a welcome nor a bit o' love for him anywhere, our mother's heart was sorry for him. You ken it was just a mother's pity made her often gie him a full meal, and mend his claithes, and listen to his bairnhood's sorrows. And our fayther had a kind heart, he didna choose to see what he didna care to hinder; but noo Roland is a gay young man, and there's no very good say-so's anent him coming frae London."

"Whose say-so's? Only the black-hearted Graeme's. Roland and I played together many a long summer-day; and I ken what Roland is. He has loved me ever since I was six years auld, and I hae loved him likewise; and he is coming this vera summer to ask fayther to let him marry me. And then to hear the way fayther went on at the Graemes. I dinna think it's Christian to be sae bitter to dead folk. Roland says, if fayther had been 'orn a Graeme he would hae done as the Graemes did."

"You are a wicked lassie to listen to Roland Graeme putting your ain fayther amang the warst men that Scotland e'er saw,—and there's nae sense either in such reasoning; Nane at a'!

It would be as wise like to say if the angel Gabriel had been the deil he would hae done as the deil did. And as for loving a man like Roland Graeme its no to be thought of."

"What for no? Mother wasna sae much opposed to you wedding wi' Roland's uncle. She said it was a great honor. You heard her, Faith?"

"It was a moment's thought o' the castle and the title. It was mother-like to be wishing her child a fine lady, but mother isna ane to give way to a temptation for mair than a moment:—forbye there would be no honor o' any kind in being the wife o' Roland Graeme. You couldna offer a greater insult to your ain family, and to your forbears."

"I'm no caring for my forbears. Why should I? They dinna care for me."

"You are maybe mista'en, Agnes, anent that: but surely you are caring for your fayther and mother, for mysel' and wee Davie. Fayther would count your marriage with Roland a disgrace no to be wiped out. It would hurt him through every generation of the Harribees. You must hae heard tell o' the shadow on Roland's birth."

“The puir lad isna to be blamed, nor shamed for his mother, Faith.”

“Perhaps no, but it is a sad thing when a man does na like to speak of his ain mother. She was a Roman woman, born under the temporal and spiritual power, baith, o’ the Pope; and she was ane o’ them women that act in the-a-tres; and fayther wha thinks bad enough o’ the Graeme stock, thinks o’ Roland as the vera worst o’ what was evil to start with. Agnes, dearie, you’ll no dream of such a marriage. Naething but shame, and sorrow, and maybe death can follow it. For a blow like that would kill mother; you ken she hasna had a weel day since Davie was born, and her life is in her bairns. I canna think you’d lift your hand against mother.”

“I think fayther is the most unreasonable o’ mortals. There may be good Graemes, as well as good Harribees.”

“You’ll no gather any sweet apples off a crab tree; I’m thinking, Agnes.”

“I dinna care. I hae promised Roland, and I’ll not break faith with him.”

She stood bravely to this position for a little while, then under pressure of Faith’s entreaties,

wavered ; and finally amid many tears promised not to see Roland again. When he came to the castle, Faith was to explain every thing to him, and Faith really thought that the tie was but a youthful fancy, and would be easily broken.

CHAPTER III.

THE ENTRANCE OF SORROW.

“Alas ! by some degree of woe
We every bliss must gain,
The heart can ne’er a transport know
That never feels a pain.”

“The primal duties shine aloft like stars.”

PERHAPS Agnes intended to keep her promise, but they must be very wise and very strong, who can defy surprises that take the heart by storm. One summer night she was in the garden. It had been raining; the roof, and lintels, and the flagged steps were still wet, and the damp misty air was heavy with the scent of flowers. There was a great white rosebush by the stone-wall of the inclosure, and she stood behind it, though a heavy fog had risen from the Esk, and the twilight was fast passing into the dark. She was anxious and expectant, and had come out into the silent place for a few minutes rest.

It had been one of those contrary days when every household event is out of order. The mother and babe were both sick, something was wrong in the byre among the milking cows, the supper was belated, the servants hurried and cross, even Faith was worried and unlike herself. Agnes had felt that for a few moments she must escape the sense of duty, the cry of pain, the hurry of the household work. And if the garden was damp and misty, it was also sweet and quiet, and full of that inexpressible sympathy which makes us feel the friendship of the hills and streams, and the blossoming flowers.

She stood by the rose bush quite still, in a simply receptive mood. Many tangled threads of thought drifted through her mind, and in some slightly conscious way she challenged them, but Roland Graeme was the underlying sentiment that colored all. She knew that the time had arrived for his visit; she wondered what he would do and say; and what her father would do and say, but she did not dare to question her own heart upon the matter.

Suddenly she looked up. A tall figure was coming through the mist and mirk, straight and

swiftly toward her. It was too dark to distinguish any peculiar feature, but she knew the poise of the haughty head, and the swing of the rapid tread. Before she could consciously decide on her own movements, she had passed from behind the shadow of the rose bush, Roland had recognized her, and bending across the low wall, had lifted her face to his own, and kissed it.

Then what hurried words of affection followed! What passionate avowals of constancy! What entreaties! What assurances! And yet when all was said, how conscious both were, that love's sweetest meanings are not to be spoken. Roland had been coming direct to Harribee House. He had intended no concealment. But Agnes feared her father. She knew that if it came to a question between them she would have to submit. She felt utterly unable to face the moral opposition to her love, and she was quite determined not to give up her lover.

Her disposition precisely suited Roland's views. "I will keep out of sight," he said, "and to-morrow night at Kirtle Bridge, I will be waiting." Then he kissed her again, and

stepped back into the misty shadows by Esk-side, and so up to the castle.

His visit at this time had been looked forward to very anxiously by the lovers. On it his future depended. He was just of age, and he was aware that he was to receive some small sum of money which had been realized for him by the sale of his father's personal effects. He had no idea as to its amount, but he understood that its receipt would make him the master of his own destiny, and that he need expect no further assistance from his relatives.

He had arrived at Castle Graeme in the afternoon and found his uncle quite prepared to meet him. Their interview was perfectly courteous. If Lord Tilbert had never been affectionate, neither had he been actively unkind. Roland Graeme had no complaint to make when he said "Roland, you are now of age. I claim no further control over you. When your father died, I invested all his personal property in your name and for your benefit. The sum realized was five thousand two hundred pounds. I placed it in the funds, and I have never touched a shilling of it. Your support and

education has been ungrudgingly provided for by Miss Graeme and myself, so that the original sum with its accumulated interest, is at your disposal. I advise you to buy a commission in a good marching regiment. But I claim no further right to interfere in your life. It is now in your own hands."

The words were spoken without apparent feeling of any kind, and with a grave courtesy Lord Graeme knew well how to assume. They impressed the young man with a sense of kindness and gratitude.

"Lord Graeme," he answered, "you have done better for me than many in your place would have done. You are not to blame for the wrong my father did me; and I do not blame you, because you receive the advantage of it. Sometimes I have felt that I was an intruder here; but I shall intrude no more, and I ask your pardon for any annoyance I have innocently been the cause of to you."

And Lord Graeme was more moved by the frank speech than he cared to avow; but he said, "Why then, Roland, you are still a Graeme though your 'scutcheon be barred by others' fault; and look you, I like the brave way in

which you take your wrong—and it may be—that it will be righted.”

He said the last words looking downward, very slowly, and as if they were reluctantly forced from him. “I think your aunt desires to see you before you go away ; but you need not hurry your departure. The red room is still yours.”

“It will be better for me to go at once. I have my career to make. I have a friend who will meet me very soon, and we shall return to London together.”

“As you will.”

To Roland six thousand pounds, more or less, was a large sum of money. He was elated with the project of controlling it. And his first thought had been Agnes Harribee. He meant to ask Matthew for his daughter, and he thought the possession of so much money, would remove all the old Covenanter’s scruples. But when Agnes made him understand how hopeless the request would be, he was glad to overleap it, and to take the girl he loved, without attempting to satisfy prejudices and ideas with which he had not a particle of sympathy.

And Agnes had the strength which weak

women who have arrived at a stubborn point have. She was chided for her long absence, and scarcely heard or heeded. In another day she would have escaped from all the petty trials of her life. It happened to be a very hard day again. In the gray dawn, before she was well awake, she heard her father in the yard; the boys whistling to the horses, the lowing cows, the whetstone ringing against the upright sickles. It was the first day of harvest, and the light oats trembling on the Esk slopes, were to fall before the reaper.

Some extra hands had been hired for the field work, and there were extra meals to prepare for them—the dew-drink or early glass of beer before going afield, the ten-o'clock of bread and bacon; and the bread and cheese for “cheesing time” in mid afternoon. And there had been no extra hands hired for the house work, though the mother was pale and weak from yesterday’s suffering, and the babe was cutting his teeth as hardly as very healthy children frequently do.

So it was a hard day and very little rest for any one; besides which the weather was hot and exhausting. The men worked until the dark hour drove them from the field, and

Matthew was so weary that he made no attempt to apply the few verses of the psalm he read. Soon after nine all were asleep but Faith and Agnes, and the fretful babe. Even the mother had fallen into that dead slumber with which nature restores the throbbing nerves. So Faith had brought wee Davie into her own room, and it seemed to Agnes as if the child never would shut his eyes. Thinking of Roland waiting for her on Kirtle Bridge, she grew almost hysterical when she looked at them, wide open as if the hour was noon-day.

“Is there naething you can do, to put that bairn to sleep, Faith? I’m maist beside mysel’ for an hour’s rest. I’ll no be fit for a hand’s turn the morrow.”

“He’ll no go to sleep till he’s worn himsel’ oot. The puir wee laddie has a toothache that would keep men folk waking nae doubt. Tak’ your pillow and go and lie down aside Phemie. She’ll never heed you.”

“Phemie is worse than Davie. She moans and talks and mutters, and has such fearsome dreams, there’s no a wink o’ sleep where she is.”

“Weel then, try the sofa in the best room. Get your first sleep, and ye’ll be the better o’

it; and then you can mind the bairn, and let me hae an hour or twa afore the day dawn."

No proposal could have suited Agnes better. The latticed window of the best room opened readily by a handle. It was near the ground. Escape that way was easy and noiseless. For a moment she hesitated, then she lifted her pillow.

"And I'll tak my plaid to hap mysel'," she said, "it will be enou' this warm night. Faith, maybe it isna vera kind to leave you your lane. Davie has been in your arms a' day."

"Dinna think o' that. You are younger than I am, and you need mair sleep; forbye, you were twice to the field to-day. Nae wonder you are weary."

"You are a kind, kind lassie! Gie me a kiss, Faith."

Oh in the years that followed how often Faith thought of the pretty child-like face lifted to her for a moment! How often she reproached herself for the touch of impatience with which she had granted the request. For, somehow, though the words and action were loving and sweet, there was in Faith's heart a feeling that

a little help and patience would have been still more loving and sweet.

But no fear, no presentiment of what the girl was on the point of doing troubled her. She walked mechanically about the room with the child, until suddenly both were so weary and sleepy that she did not remember when they sunk down together upon the bed. It was dawn when she stirred; the half-wakened birds were twittering in the cherry-tree that covered that side of the house, and she heard her father's voice calling the men to another day's labor.

She left the child asleep and went down stairs, but she did not think of Agnes. Even when she remembered the girl it was with a kindly pity. "She'll hae the weight o' the running to-day. I'll let her sleep till Davie wakes."

When Davie awoke she was busy with a pan of milk in the dairy. She put down the horn skimmer and went to the best room. It had an air as empty and desolate as a forsaken nest. There had not been an article disturbed, and the window was wide open. She stood speechless a moment, she could not bear to admit to her-

self the calamity she feared. Then she thought of her mother.

Before any thing else she felt that she must assure herself of the girl's flight. Cautiously she made inquiries of the servant-women and men, but none of them had seen Agnes since the previous day. It was quite certain that she was not on the place. Faith let her father eat his breakfast, and give the orders for the day's work, and then she called him into the best room. It was such an unusual proceeding, that he asked querulously : "What are you needing me for, the day, Faith? Is your mother or the little lad waur?"

"It's no them, fayther. It's Agnes."

"What's the matter wi' Agnes?"

"I canna find her high or low, up or down. I'm feared she's gane awa' wi' somebody."

Matthew stared blankly at her a moment, then asked, "Did you see Roland Graeme herabout, yesterday?"

"I never saw a sight o' him."

But he was at the castle, and likewise at Mosskirtle. Ane o' the men met him on the hill-side. Why dinna you speak?"

"I daurna say what I'm fearing."

“Do you think she has gane wi’ him?”

“Ay, I think sae. Oh Agnes! Agnes!”

“If that’s your thocht, you’ll no dare to be greeting after her. Let her gae. She’s a wicked lass, and I’ll ware neither tears nor care on her.”

But ah what a wretched heart he carried to the harvest field that day! He tried to work in vain. Before noon he was compelled to put down his sickle. The uncertainty made him sick, besides there was a whisper of his trouble among the reapers, and he could not bear the looks of inquiry cast at him. He took a horse and went into Mosskirtle. When near the village he met a group of boys hunting blackberries, and one of them ran to him with a paper.

“I was coming out to Harribee, master, wi’ it; but I foregathered wi’ Dick Musgrave and the lave, and I forgot a’ about it, till I saw your braid bonnet at the brig foot.”

Matthew heeded not the apology, he was reading the few lines Roland Graeme had written him. Such letters are in spirit all alike. However they may be worded they amount to the same thing—“we wanted our own way and

we have taken it," in defiance of every claim, of every loving tie, of every duty. As usual also there was a hope of pardon and an offer of any obedience but just the one that included the whole.

The boy had joined his companions again, and Matthew heard their shouts and laughter through his hard mental struggle. A homely commonplace figure he made, sitting motionless on his shaggy pony in the white stony road ; but all the same, within his soul he was doing battle with some of the fiercest griefs and shames that assail humanity.

He thought of his honorable name, of his spotless kirk record, of the men who would privately rejoice o'er his downcome, of what his neighbors, and his servants, and his friends and enemies, would say. And though he was only a border shepherd, his good name was dearer to him than gold, and these things were of vital importance—besides, he hated the Graemes. The bitterest part of the trial was, that he did not feel as if God had stood by his cause with them. He had been very jealous for the Lord, and for his saints ; and the seed of the wicked, the very men whom his soul

despised, had been permitted to humble him.

He would say nothing about the matter. To his wife he gave Roland's note, but he would not listen either to her entreaties or her laments. Faith was ordered to remove everything out of his sight that could recall a child so selfish and disobedient, or which in any way implied that she had once been a beloved daughter of his household.

Lord Tilbert took the news in a very different fashion. He had stopped at the blacksmith's to have a nail fastened in his horse's shoe, and a foolish fellow told him the story. He felled him to the ground, and then turned to the smith, and asked if it was true.

"True enough, my lord."

"Which daughter was it?"

"The bonnie ane. Maister Roland has aye been rining wild aboot her."

"Agnes Harribee?"

"Just sae."

Then he put down the horse's foot, and Graeme mounted, and galloped away—"like the diel," said the loungers around the anvil.

It was to Terres he went first in his wrath.

She listened to his intemperate words with scorn, she mocked at his passion, she irritated him to fury by praising the "do and dare" spirit of Roland who had carried off one of old Harribee's daughters while he, himself, had been hanging around the skirts of the other, like a love-sick school-boy.

"Upon my word this beardless stripling is a true Graeme," she cried. I always liked the spirit of the young cock-farthing. I am glad I gave him five hundred pounds."

"Terres, are you mad? Gave him five hundred pounds?"

"I gave it. Why not? The money is my own. A man that can carry off his bride! Indeed I have a great respect for him. I wish I had given him a thousand."

"You are only trying to anger me. When you have exhausted every other human being, you try to torment me."

"Perhaps so; quarreling with you after ordinary people, is like aqua-fortis after brandy. Sometimes I like the aqua-fortis."

"Did you give him five hundred pounds?"

"I have said so."

"You had no right to."

“I think we had better not discuss either his or my rights.”

“Will you give me five hundred pounds?”

“If you dare run away with Faith Harribee.”

“I will do it.”

“I defy you. My five hundred is quite safe. Bah! Keep your temper, Tilbert, if you want to keep your good looks. You are positively ugly this morning.”

Then he flung himself out of the room with a mouthful of such words as can only be printed with their first and last letters; and Terres met them with a laugh which echoed in his angry heart long after he was out of the reach of her voice.

But most men get more love than they deserve, and when Graeme spoke to his sister in the evening on the same subject, but in a more reasonable manner, he found her just as sympathetic to its mood.

“Don’t you think I ought to see Harribee and acquit myself of any blame in Roland’s conduct; I feel as if it were my duty, Terres.”

“Have you at length made the acquaintance of duty? Why should you see Harribee?”

"The Harribees have been the Graeme's neighbors for nearly a thousand years. Matthew Harribee and I have never been unfriends. All our intercourse has been civil and honorable."

"Depend upon it, he thinks as badly of you as he can do—and I should judge he was able to think very badly indeed of any one not cut on his own pattern. I would not interfere with the old whig. He is sure to regard your sympathy as an impertinence, and answer you according to your folly."

"I don't think so."

"Of course you don't. When a man asks advice, it is not advice he wants, but approbation. Let old Harribee and his troubles alone. Why should you meddle or make in the affairs of a man clearly heart-set against you?"

"Our land and lot has been cast among a dour, stern set. It had been good for the borders if the preachers had never seen them, a sour ill-willy have their own way lot."

"There are many crooked sticks in this world, and tempers. When a man is not naturally amiable and conciliating, he ought to

be thankful if he can do his quarrelling at home."

Nevertheless, in spite of his sister's advice, when Graeme next met Matthew Harribee he stumbled into the mistake of expressing in a blundering fashion his disapproval of Roland's conduct. Matthew listened to him with a face resentful and dark.

"There's nae need o' words," he said. "If the lass hadna been a wicked lass, she wouldna hae foregathered hersel' wi' ane o' your name and kind. She has gane to her ain. I hae naething further to say anent it."

But Harribee's home was a dismal place during the weeks and months following this event. The name of Agnes had been dropped from the family speech, and the family prayers, but it was not so easy to banish the memory of the girl from the hearts of those who still loved her. One day Faith found her mother in a passion of grief before the big bible.

"See here, Faith!" she sobbed, "my bairn's name has been crossed oot o' The Book! Oh but your fayther is a hard man! I wonder if God hasna mair pity on us!"

The poor woman sobbed all the night after

this discovery. She had been growing daily weaker and weaker and less able to hide emotions which she had hitherto kept between God and her own soul. But she made no complaint, and the household had grown familiar with her pale face, and silence, and weakness. One Sunday she sat in her place at the family table as usual, but she fainted during the long evening worship, and Matthew carried her up-stairs in his arms.

She never came down them again. When the first snow of the season was whitening the fells and moors, she touched Matthew early one morning and said "wake up, gudeman, and gie me your farewell. I'm going hame! I'm going hame!"

It was a great shock to him. He had not thought of her death. He was almost angry at her eager anticipation of the change. Nor was his grief untinged with remorse. He remembered, when too late, how, in the satisfaction of his own anger, he had quite neglected to share her sorrow for her lost daughter.

"You hae dropped my puir Agnes frae your prayers, gudeman," she had said on her last earthly sabbath, "but I'll soon be whar I can

pray for her, e'en on the vera steps o' the altar." And he had seen the large tears roll down her wan cheeks, and not heeded them. Now God had wiped them away. She would need a comforter no more.

He suffered very much, but it was not Matthew's way to complain of suffering. It was God's will. In the end that always sufficed for him. And there was still the little lad and the farm to live for,—and Faith. Faith was an afterthought, for Faith had never needed thought; she was always the one to take it for others. She had been her mother's right hand and also her father's strength and counselor, although Matthew never thought of her in that light and would have been offended if any one had dared to say so.

But it was in Faith's ear the dying mother whispered her last desires. "You'll keep a prayer in your heart for Agnes; and you'll be gude to your fayther, dear, and never let him want any o' his comforts and likings; and Oh, Faith! I'll hae to leave my wee Davie wi' you!"

"You can do it safely, mother. I'll ne'er say a cross word to him. He sall want nae

gude thing, nor any bit o' pleasuring I can get for him. Clasp my hand on the promise, mother! Dear mother! sweet mother! Never fear but Faith will do her duty."

And the dying woman fixed her gaze upon her daughter's brave, true face, and so gazing and smiling, she passed

"Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call earth,"

into "the palace of eternity."

CHAPTER IV.

THE WILL OF GOD.

"Not as we will!" the sound grows sweet
Each time our lips the words repeat ;
"Not as we will!" the darkness feels
More safe than light when this thought steals
Like whispered voice to calm and bless
All unrest, and all loneliness.
"Not as we will!" because the One
Who loved us first and best has gone
Before us on the road, and still
For us must all His love fulfill—
"Not as we will!"

—HELEN HUNT JACKSON.

THE incurable ills are the imaginary ones. Matthew's sorrow was now a real sorrow, and he bore it with a grand and patient resignation. Hearts take a deal of breaking that have their help in God Almighty, and the inevitable loss was borne with submissive fortitude because it was His will. Very quietly the house settled itself into the new order of its depleted number. And no one is indispensable. This is one of the saddest and most humili-

ating of all natural reflections, but the heart must admit its truth. The husband, the wife, the father, the mother, the lover is taken away, and the broken home-ranks draw closer together, and the vacant place is in some way filled.

So the spring came again and the shepherd went to the fells and folded his ewes and lambs. He plowed the head-rig on his fields, and flung the seed-grain over them. When the summer was over the land, he swept the scythe from right to left, and cut cleanly through the full swath while it was yet wet with dew. In the autumn he was first in the harvest-field, and though he cared not for the in-coming revelry, when all were beating time with cadence and the house was ringing around with the harvest song,

“ We have plowed ! we have sowed !
We have reaped ! we have mowed !
We have brought home every load
With a hip ! hip ! Hurrah ! ”

he had his own song of gratitude, and was happy in his increase.

And the child became more and more to his heart. For he was a bold, loving little fellow, with a nature like his sister Faith's, sweet and

strong. Every hope was centered in him. Matthew had always been a close man, watchful over his outgo and income, but he now looked with a double care after his flocks and crops. On Harribee land and farm no slip-string ways were tolerated. He knew the value of every thing he possessed to a half-penny, and he began to be regarded as an able man, one, who if there were a fine cow or a drove of sheep for sale, was certain to have the wherewith to buy.

Faith heartily seconded his plans for her brother ; though she did not tie her heart down to this one object. Agnes was still in all her thoughts. Anxiously she watched for a letter from her ; but as weeks passed into months and years, she ceased gradually to expect what never came. Privately, Matthew had shared her hope, but he never admitted it, even to his own heart, and perhaps was only conscious of how really a vital part of his life it had been, by the keen pang with which he finally put the girl forever out of his memory.

Faith also had her lover. She did not make the circumstance one to which the whole household pleasure and economy was to give place,

but, nevertheless, he was very dear to her. She had loved Archie Renwick in her calm, steadfast way, ever since she had thought of a lover ; he only, had received from her any maidenly encouragement. Archie was a distant cousin of her mother's ; a jaunty, handsome young farmer who was perhaps less deserving of her favor than she supposed. But there appears to be a perverse tendency in the best and strongest women toward those men who are morally and mentally weaker than themselves.

There had been no objection made to the proposed match. Whatever Matthew thought of the young man, he had no fault to find with his family. The Renwicks, like the Harribees had been great "riders," and also great saints ; and their present representative was inclined to be boastful—according to the mood he was in—about the men of both spirits. It was said quietly that he liked to be chief of the young chaps in the change-house, and that when he was in that peculiar condition called market-merry, he was equally ready to troll out a good rieving song, or thrill the smoky rafters with the solemn passion of a Covenanting battle-hymn.

But of these things Faith heard nothing ; and she saw no danger in the rather riotous good-nature which was partly real, and partly affected. She never thought of his fine voice and mettlesome violin playing leading him astray. She was rather attracted than warned by qualities so different from the sombre virtues of her father. Archie's father had left him a few thousand pounds, and the running lease of a good farm belonging to Lord Graeme. In worldly matters he was well-to-do when he first sought Faith for his wife ; but he had not even held his own ; and border men had begun to look dubiously on any business transaction which involved a risk with Archie Renwick.

Matthew was quickly sensitive to this feeling, and he began to consider how best to tie safely in Faith's own power the sum of money he intended to leave her. But he made no undue haste in the matter. Faith had promised to remain with David, until the child was well over all the dangerous places of infantile years, and sturdy and strong enough to take his way over the fells to the parish school at Mosskirtle, every day.

But years in which nothing particular happens

go by very rapidly; and almost before either the father or the sister realized the fact, the child was in his seventh year, and talking with eager enthusiasm of the wonderful times before him—the tramp every morning and evening to and from Mosskirtle, with Gibby Foster and Dick Musgrave, and the collie dogs which each boy particularly cared for. It was evident the children had their confidences, and plans, and expectations, and Matthew and Faith smiled at each other as they listened to them. They were so innocent, so bright with hope, so full of brave intentions.

“As soon as the snow is gone, I may start for school, eh, fayther?” he asked one stormy night in February.

“You may that, Davie. And you sall hae the bible, and the spelling-book, and the shorter carritch I used mysel’ saxty years syne. I hae them in a kist up-stairs.”

“The spring willna be lang now, Dick says.”

“Ay, though we’re in the hole o’ the winter yet, spring is na far a hint. And if its weather-like, you sall gae wi me next market day to Hawick, and I’ll buy you a new slate, and some pencils, and the like o’ thae things; forbye a gude braid

bonnet, and a plaidie to hap yoursel' in—for it's aye cauld-like on Kirtle brow."

The boy talked continually of this trip to Hawick, and he looked forward impatiently for the day. Often, during the night before it, Faith heard him steal quietly from his bed, and lift the curtain and peep out. "The stars are a' bright, and the lift clear," she heard him tell himself, and then with a little sigh of contentment in the knowledge, he laid him down, and tried to sleep again.

The morning was fair, and not very cold. He was full of excitement, and Matthew could not help catching a ray or two from the boy's sunny temper. They went off in the tax-cart together, Faith and Phemie, and the too young lassies, all standing in the open door to watch them away—Davie, rosy and noisy with delight; and Matthew half-ashamed, and yet pleased with the unusual atmosphere of a holiday. And all the long morning Faith thought of them with a smile, as she went about her work.

Early in the afternoon all was in spotless order and she took out her big wheel and began to spin. Never had Harribee house-place

looked more bright and attractive. It's great oak rafters were full of goodly hams, and flitches, and of bunches of sweet herbs. Its walls were gay with copper and pewter utensils, and with old delft and showy earthenware. Over the high chimney-piece among the tall brass candlesticks there were many rosettes of variously-colored satin ribbons, framed and glazed—Matthew's market prizes for fine sheep and cattle, and highly valued by him. A bright fire of coal and peat blazed in the wide fireplace, and the spotless sanded floor was brightened by a strip of carpet, and a large hearthrug of white sheep skins.

On this strip of carpet Faith stood beside her spinning wheel, stepping to and fro with a strong, alert grace, and singing as she did so one of the most plaintive of all Scotch Laments:

“ There's nae Cov'nant noo lassie,
There's nae Cov'nant noo ;
The holy League and Cov'nant,
Is a' broken through.
There's nae Renwick noo, lassie ;
There's nae gude Cargill,
Nor holy Sabbath preaching
Upon the martyr's hill.”

She was not at all conscious of the complain-

ing pathos in her voice. She was not thinking of the Covenanters; but her nature being serious and poetic, she was rendering an old hymn of her people with all the passionate regret which inspired it.

Nor did she know how in her grand Doric simplicity she suggested some household deity of Homeric days; for her dress was but a plain gray winsey with a white lawn kerchief crossed over her breast. She was now in her twenty-seventh year, a perfect woman nobly planned. Her face, though large and brown, was very handsome, her stature tall and finely formed, and her beautiful arms long, and strong, and rapid in all their movements, were the very embodiment of the cherishing idea—the arms to cradle helpless infancy, to bear up the weak, and to pillow the sick—a woman altogether of ample being, such as are ordained for help and consolation.

As she stepped backward and forward before the big wheel, she glanced frequently out of the window. The day had clouded after the noon hour. She began to fear snow, and to watch anxiously for her father and Davie's return. The clock struck three. She walked

to the door and looked with wistful solicitude over the hills. Then she resumed her work, but without the song. In an hour she hurriedly set her wheel aside and again looked out. The air was very still, the sky low and gray; a feeling of alarm mastered all her faculties.

She went into the kitchen, and she saw that the milking girls who were just leaving for the byre, had their shawls over their heads; so she understood that they also expected a storm. An old woman was smoking at the fireside, Phemie, a servant who had been in Harribee Home more than forty years, and in whom Faith trusted with all her heart.

“Phemie, I see naught at a’ of fayther and wee Davie; and I’m feared there’s a storm brewing. The dogs are faulding the sheep, and they are ne’er mista’en.”

Phemie rose and went to the door. Slowly she turned her brown, wrinkled face to the hills, and then to the moss. “There’s a storm coming up frae auid’ Solway, lass. There’ll be snaw and plenty o’ it, in half an hour. I wish the maister was by Johnstone’s Scaur. It’s a vera bad bit, and his sight isna what it ance

was, though you daurna say the like o' that to him. He'll no hear tell o' it."

Faith had turned away ere the sentence was finished. In a few minutes she appeared with her dress kilted and her plaid tightly folded over her head and breast. "I'm awa' to look for them, Phemie. I hae a sickness at my heart anent them. You'll keep the fires and a' else as they should be—and, oh Phemie! Phemie! think o' wee Davie, and pray God for their safety."

"I'se do my duty, Faith, but the purposes o' God canna be changed by an auld wife's tears. Come woe, or come weal, we hae but to say, 'His will be done!'"

Faith shook her head sorrowfully, and with a heart sunk below all reasoning with, and which would only answer her forebodings, she went hurrying over the moor amid the first flakes of the coming snow. Happily there was no wind, and she knew her way without doubt or hesitation. It soon became dark, but yet all was so still that she was sure if her father had been upon the moor he must have heard and answered her repeated calls.

A rapid walk of two miles brought her to

Johnstone's Scaur, a narrow pass overhanging a stony ravine nearly one hundred feet deep ; and here she frequently paused, cautiously felt her way to its extreme edge, and peering over, loudly called her father's and brother's names. There was a sort of sighing wind in this narrow gorge, but Faith's ears detected upon it a mournful tone of human agony.

"Oh, my dear God ! They are at the Scaur bottom ?"

She never reasoned with herself as to the probability. She knew it with that certainty with which we realize a dreaded presentiment. Then she stood a moment to consider how most speedily to help them. She could go back half a mile and enter the gorge from that end ; or, she could go forward a mile and enter it from the village. She chose the latter course. At the village she could get lights and help and she felt confident that both were needed.

When the decision was made she followed it out with a swiftness and strength that was marvellous to herself. Her soul took complete possession of all her faculties. She scarcely felt her own feet ; they were shod with brass, and the angels who wait upon great emergen-

cies held her up. The darkness was light to her. She never made a stumble or a false step. The cold she never felt. It was not snowing to her. Every pulse of her being was bent toward one object—*help* ! for the beloved ones lying helpless and alone in storm and in mortal agony.

Her head was bent to the whirling flakes, but her soul was uplifted. She had come to an hour of life in which she forgot all about creeds or forms, and just clung to the very robe of her Saviour. Running, and praying as she ran, she soon reached the village change-house, and with white lips and gleaming eyes she pushed open the door and told her sorrowing need.

In a moment half a dozen men were pulling their bonnets over their brows and reaching down their plaids. The change-wife lit their lanterns, and put into Faith's hands a flask of whisky. "Tak' it, for I'm fearing it will be sair needed," she sobbed. "Oh, the bonnie bit bairn! He was that sweet and merry this afternoon. I'll ne'er forget him."

In less than five minutes they were on the road. They had not far to go. Half-way up the gorge they found Matthew with his son in

his arms. The horse lay dead in its traces. The child was motionless and senseless, but the miserable father, with a broken arm and a terribly crushed ankle, had managed to get his boy into the neuk of his plaid, and was trying to hirple homeward with him. And oh, how great, how wonderful must have been the human love that could even contemplate such a walk!

But when Faith and help came, the agony he was enduring mastered him. He saw her lay his little Davie against her heart, and then he too lost all consciousness. His friends made a hammock of their plaids and carried him home, but Faith, with her brother in her arms, far outstripped them. When the men reached the farm-house, bearing Matthew, Faith had had little David in a hot bath, and was tenderly rubbing his small motionless limbs before the fire. But no sign of consciousness came into the wide-open eyes, and when the doctor bent over him he shook his head mournfully and turned away to attend to the father's more hopeful injuries.

Alas, what days and nights of agony followed! To Matthew's broken limbs were

added acute inflammation of the lungs, and severe rheumatic pains. He had borne all with a silent patience which had its foundation on the rock of his faith—the will of God.

“Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not evil?” he said to Phemie one night when his suffering was very great, and the old Cameronian answered steadily:

“The evil is gude, if He send it; and though He slay us, maister, we must e’en trust in Him.”

Still Matthew’s faith was to be tested by a far hotter furnace. One day he was told that David would live; but the doctor said the words mournfully, and Faith wept bitterly behind her apron. Then he looked at old Phemie, and she could but give him the comfort she had herself always found sufficient:

“It is the Lord’s doing, maister. He must aye do what seems right in His ain sight.”

“Bring Davie to me.”

Then they brought the boy in. At the first glimpse he seemed to be the same bright, lovely boy whom he had so proudly taken with him to Hawick that fateful day. But in another moment Matthew had measured the depth of

his trial. The child would never be more than a child. The light of intellect was gone from his large blue eyes.

“Will he always be sae, doctor? Is there nae hope?”

“There is no hope, Matthew.”

“Then leave me! A’ you leave me! Leave me wi’ Him whose hand is sae heavy on me.”

It was not so much a request as a bitter cry; the cry of the wounded human heart to its maker. What anguish there was in it! As long as she lived, Faith remembered its broken-hearted appeal.

For two days the master of Harribee spoke to no one. He neither ate nor drank, but remained in solitude and darkness. The struggle was over then. He had kissed the hand that smote him, and been comforted above all mortal comprehension.

“It is a’ right, Faith,” he said, calmly. “I am mair than satisfied. My God has proved me; but I can say with brave Walter Myln, ‘I am corn; I am no chaff. Neither with wind shall I be blown awa’, nor burst by flail; but I will baith abide.’”

Then he talked long and solemnly with her

about the farm and the boy's future, and she clasped his hands between her own, and said :

“ Before your God, and my God, I promise, you, fayther, I will never, never leave him. I will die, ere I see a hair o' his dear wee head wranged. I will put no one's welfare or pleasure afore his. It is the truth in God's ain hearing.”

“ Not e'en Archie Renwick ? ”

“ Not e'en Archie Renwick.”

CHAPTER V.

ARCHIE RENWICK'S HEART.

“How brief Death's darkness ! But one faltering step
Into the night, and the Master's door
Stands wide in joyful welcome.”

“Whoever may
Discern true ends here shall grow pure enough
To love them, brave enough to strive for them,
And strong enough to reach them, though the road be rough.”

FAITH'S solemn promise had been made in the exaltation of tenderness and solemnity of self-abnegation natural to an hour so near the horizon of the eternal life. But even when she came to consider all it implied in a more world-like and practical spirit, she felt no desire to release herself from any obligation it either warranted or implied. Her love for Davie had much of the maternal element in it. From his very birth she had cradled him in her arms, and soothed all his baby pains and sorrows. Her

last words to her dying mother had been about him, and she had stepped beyond the grave with Faith's tender promises for the babe in her ears.

The care had been one which had brought love and joy with it. She had been as proud of the boy's beauty, and spirit, and promising intellect, as Matthew himself. Together they had planned great futures for the child. Even the university and the pulpit had been thought of for him. His great calamity had only made him a thousand-fold dearer. The finger of God had touched him ; henceforward he was an object of almost sacred affection.

Matthew was quite satisfied with the promise Faith had made him. He asked no re-iteration of it, but made his last testament in accord with what they had agreed upon. For it was now evident to all that he would not live long. Some internal injury, which no physician could place or relieve, was wasting his large frame rapidly.

"I'm wearin' awa', Faith, to the land o' the leal," he said, one Sabbath night, as the household were gathering round his big chair for "the portion." "I'll put aff my week-day

claithes for the raiment o' the eternal Sabbath,
vera soon, I'm thinkin'."

"Ay, fayther, but—

" ' There's nae sorrow there,
There's neither pain nor care
And the day is aye fair
In the land o' the leal ! ' "

"Nane o' its beauties I'm forgetting, Faith,
forbye I'll see your mither and the bairns
again. There's mair to go to than to leave.
Come near to me, lads and lasses, for my voice
is sair failed, and I hae a word to say to you
afore I gae a road I sall never return. My
Maister has called me, and I'm going to Him.
Tak' notice that I bear testimony this night:
He has been a gude Maister to me. Though
He has slain me, my heart loves Him and trusts
in Him. Sae, tak' service wi' Him and dinna
put aff your duty. For, if you become the
servants o' the diel, you'll find that sin is the
fountain o' sorrow, and that punishment will
follow hard upon every sin. And the laws o'
God require no constable; they execute them-
sel's.

"And dinna be telling lies to your ain souls,
and saying wi' Armenians and such like, that the
last minute o' the twelfth hour is enou' for

mercy. They'll be aye speaking to you anent the penitent thief on the cross. They'll say mair than they hae any call to say. There's nae doubt i' my mind he was penitent long afore he met Christ on Calvary. We ken naething o' his previous life, but he knew a' about the life o' Christ, or he wouldna hae said, 'He hath done naething amiss'; and he believed in His Messiahship, or he wouldna hae said, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom'. Mind this also: Christ's ain law was, 'Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom o' Heaven. But he that doeth the will of my Father who is in Heaven.' Weel, then, Christ wouldna break his ain law, sae we may be sure he kent a' about the man hanging at his side, kent him to be a doer o' His will. Off the vera brow o' Calvary you're no to be takin' a fause hope to yoursel's.

"I'm weary, noo. Whiles I hae spoke a bit sharp to you, and whiles I may hae been a bit unjust wi' you, forgie me at this hour."

His voice had fallen to a whisper. He was quite exhausted, but he feebly stretched out his large, gaunt hand, and they each took it in silence as they left the room.

He had said more words than he intended to say, but none of them touched the hearts of his servants as his steadfast, lingering farewell gaze into each of their faces did. It had the same effect upon all—it recalled in a moment their hours of labor together in the fields, and the threshing-floor, and up the hills among the sheep; and it gave to each of them alike a rendezvous upon the hills of God, and beside the still waters of Paradise.

He saw them no more. During the next few days there was a singular light upon his face, the light of the rising, not the setting sun, and one night, when only Faith was watching by him, he disappeared into the cloud of death. So he was gathered to his forefathers in the lonely yard on the windy hill-side, and Faith was alone with her brother in Harribee Home.

She was in every legal sense the inheritor of the farm; but her father's request to Faith had far more authority than any legal right. She regarded herself simply as administrator for her brother. There had been some slight improvement in Davie's condition, and Matthew had built some, perhaps unreasonable, hopes, upon it. Whatever could be done for the boy, she

had pledged herself to do ; yes, though the last acre of Harribee was sold for the purpose. All was hers in trust for Davie's relief or happiness ; and the trust appeared to her as a simple act of justice. Her whole soul accepted it.

It was in the early summer Matthew Harribee died, just when the blossoms were falling off the fruit trees, and the meadow grass was growing long and sweet for the mowers. The work of the farm went on with little interruption. The servants were well trained, and Faith had always taken a very large share in the management of the farm. The men and women came naturally to her for advice and direction. She was quiet and positive, and had the serviceable art of winning the confidence and liking of those who worked at her bidding.

The house was strangely still, but the daily life went on. There was an unusually prosperous lambing season, and the haymaking and harvest-time were equally satisfactory. Faith watched every thing without seeming to watch. She was up the hills, and in the fields sufficiently often to prevent eye-service ; and the dairy and the household were as profitable, and as spotless, as they had always been.

Everywhere she went, Davie was with her. To climb the hills and wander among the sheep and lambs, at her side, was his delight. He did not readily weary, and his step was lighter and more rapid than Faith's. In the dairy, and in the garden, about the house and at the kirk, he was her constant companion—a beautiful, patient, harmless boy, that every one pitied and loved.

Every one but Archie Renwick. In his heart there had long been growing a wretched anger against the child. He looked upon Faith as his own, and he resented her devotion to the motherless boy, even when he was a baby, to be walked to sleep or dandled upon her knee. If Faith were tired, or had a headache, he counted it a fault against the child. If she were too busy to give him all the time and attention he wanted he put his own deprivation down against the same innocent cause. He was growing straitened in circumstances, and at every fresh pinch his anger was greater at the delay in their marriage.

For Faith's portion was in ready money, and it seemed more and more desirable to him. During the season preceding Matthew's death

he had been urging her continually for the redemption of her promise: and Matthew had reluctantly admitted, that "Davie might, may be, manage atween Harribee and Shepherd's Bush." "As for mysel'," he added, "I'll aye miss you, Faith. There's nane to fill your place; but I'll see you whiles."

While affairs were at this point, the fatal accident occurred. At first Archie's sympathies had been keenly awakened, but he was essentially a selfish man, and he soon began to find Faith's devotion to her dying father and helpless brother a very serious interference with his own pleasure and wishes. When Davie's real condition was made known to him, he was shocked at the wicked thoughts which came spontaneously into his heart. He did not reflect that years of selfish jealousy had already conceived them, and that they were ready to spring into life at the first evil opportunity.

For he had long felt Davie's existence to be altogether unnecessary and inconvenient. In a vague kind of way he had been in the habit of thinking, "if Faith had no brother." He seldom cared, or dared, to follow out the thought, but there it crouched in some cham-

ber of his soul, a moral poison, slowly permeating every kindly and honorable feeling.

After Matthew's death, the regret became a more tangible one. He found himself as he walked over the fells, counting the Harribee flocks, and wishing, "that puir, daft lad didna stand between him and Faith." He said Faith, but he meant the flocks and the farm. When he visited Harribee Home and saw Davie perched in the master's chair, he was angry. As Faith's husband he would feel himself entitled to the seat. The attitude of the servants was a vexation to him. He fancied he had their jealousy and dislike, and that in his presence they made their attentions to Davie offensively prominent. He was even irritated at Faith because she saw none of these things, and even listened to such complaints as he ventured to make with a decided lack of sympathy.

One evening in the early part of the September, following her father's death, Faith was in the barleyfield among the reapers. Archie had promised to help them, but he had fallen into a temptation the previous night, and lingered so long over Hawick market dinner that he

had been unable to keep his word. His absence had troubled Faith, for she divined the cause of it. But just when she had accepted the disappointment she straightened herself from the sheaf she had been binding, and looking over the hills saw him coming.

In a moment all her anger was gone; and Archie could not help thinking how beautiful she looked among the yellow corn, with her broad hat, and bare arms and kilted gown. "There's vera few men worthy o' her," he muttered; but among the few he certainly put himself first of all. And in mere physical beauty he was Faith's equal. In all the countryside, his size and strength, his handsome ruddy face and jovial manner inclined women to smile upon him. But pleasing as his countenance was it betrayed a weak soul, and God knows how easy it is for weakness to become wickedness.

He believed that he loved Faith, and perhaps in all his best moments he did love her. He believed that he had never been a moment influenced in his choice of her by the reputed ready-money wealth of Matthew Harribee, or by the thought that after Agnes' flight there

was only Faith and the boy to divide all. As for the darker thought which haunted his soul, after Davie's accident, it was not until this very hour he frankly acknowledged its existence to himself.

Yes, he loved Faith, though he often felt her moral and mental superiority to himself to be an irritation and an annoyance. But that evening as he watched her raise her stately figure among the barley sheaves, and shade her eyes to see his approach the better, he was very happy in the sight of her beauty and in the knowledge of her love.

The pleasant and innocent feeling lasted but a few moments. A small hand was lifted, and Faith stooped and kissed the little fellow lying among the loose grain, and when he saw the tender act he hated the child as he had never done before.

“Mair than a thousand sheep, moor, and meadows, and corn land, a gude house and garden, forbye lying siller—and an idiot between me and them! It's jist ridic'lous! Faith will hae to find her senses or lose her lad! That's a' about it!”

But he met her smiling with outstretched

hands, and Faith, who loved him with all her heart, took them with a proud and gracious gladness. Then he compelled himself to speak to Davie, but the boy pushed his hand away, and with a low cry clung closer to Faith's skirt.

"He grows queer every day, Faith."

"You're a' wrang there, Archie. Folk say that he's a deal mair noticing than he was. When the harvest is o'er I'm in the mind to tak' him to Edinburgh or maybe to London itsel'. I hae heard tell o' some wonderfu' doctors there."

"And they'll be charging wonderfu' prices; you may be sure o' that."

"Weel, an' if they do, Davie isna poor. His fayther left siller enough to pay the best o' doctors."

The words were not lost on Archie, but he did not think it prudent to say any more at that time. And the head man with the loaded wagon came near, and Davie's delight was to mount the topmost sheaf and hold the reins while Sandy led the horses. So there was a little pleasant excitement in helping him to climb to his post, and in watching his childish

glee as they started with an hurrah from the reapers.

Then it was Archie's hour. The soft September gloaming was in itself an atmosphere of enchantment. The robins and thrushes were trying to recapture their spring songs, though, alas, they had left their best notes upon the hawthorn bushes. Brown butterflies were displaying their velvets on the scarlet poppies ; there was the ancient, ancient music of murmuring bees coming laden from the heather. Every sight and sound was conducive to love, and to sweet confidence, and to trusting hope.

As they walked slowly home from the harvest field, Archie pleaded his own rights, and he pleaded them well. Never had he seemed to Faith so handsome and so sensible. At the house door she asked him in to supper, and while Phemie laid the table she went to her room, and came back looking wonderfully handsome in a black gown, and a white neckerchief and apron. Archie's eyes expressed his admiration. He went to meet her with a kiss. Then he led her to the table, and he took himself the large chair which Matthew had been wont to occupy.

As he was settling himself comfortably in it, Phemie entered the room with the tea. He had never been a favorite with Phemie, and this act roused in her a deep anger. She took Davie's hand and led him into the kitchen, and she was crying over the lad, when she heard Faith asking for her brother.

"I thocht young maister wad only be in the the way," she answered sullenly, and with a pointed emphasis on the word maister.

"You knew better, Phemie. Davie, come wi' me."

But the child took a stubborn fit, and would not go back to the house-place. "He's o'er much sense to go; he bides whar he's welcome and wanted," said Phemie; and then there was an angry scene, which in the end left Phemie triumphant, and Faith tearful and trembling. It gave Archie the opportunity he had been desiring.

"Faith, my ain dear lassie," he said tenderly, "you have far too much to do, and to bear, what wi' that crabbit auld woman, and that weary boy, no to speak of a' the charges anent the farm wark. It is high time you let me lift the weight o' it. There's been changes

that neither o' us could foretell or prevent, and what are we waiting for now, my ain dear one?"

"Fayther isna cauld in his grave yet, Archie. You ken I wouldna marry any way till a full year be come and gane."

"Weel, I must be getting a' ready for that time, then. What's your pleasure in the matter noo, Faith? The house at Shepherd's Bush isna much to speak of, and it will need a deal o' siller and wark afore it is fit for your foot. For, oh, Faith! I love you dearly, lass. I love you dearly! And I hae not a thocht in my heart, but to make you happy."

"Dinna spend labor and siller you canna afford, Archie."

"But I'm doin' weel, Faith. I'm doin' right well; though maybe now you wouldna care to leave your auld hame. Harribee is a bonnie and a comfortable place, and you would hae to rent it to strangers, and if you lighted on an ill-tenant, that would be waur than nae tenant at a'. Sae you see, there's much to talk of, and to settle for; and above all, there's this charge o' the boy and the farm—they are too much for you!"

Faith was a clear-headed woman. if she was

in love. She understood quite well all that was meant and included in Archie's words. It was a virtual proposal, that after her year's mourning was over, she should marry her lover, bring him to Harribee, and make him its real master. In some respects the proposal met her desire. She did not wish to leave her old home, and she was very averse, indeed, to remove Davie from it. Its walls not only gave him the shelter most natural, but also insensibly procured for him a certain amount of respect from the servants of the place, as its owner. She was determined, then, that if Archie came to Harribee, he should do so with the clearest understanding of the terms upon which his nominal authority rested.

So she answered steadily: "The lad never wearies me. As for the farm, I hae the vera best o' trained servants. Phemie is auld and a bit wilfu', but truth and worth hae grown wi' her, and I wouldna ken my ain life wanting her. When it is right for me to marry, I'll keep my troth wi' you, and I dinna think badly o' your coming to Harribee—if Davie is willing. For you ken, the house is Davie's, and I am only here as his guardian and trustee."

“That is fair nonsense, dearie. Davie is just an incapable. The law would pass him by wi’ a maintenance; and the house, and farm, and plenishing, and stock are a’ your ain.”

“Not a rap in the house! Not a foot o’ land! Not a lamb on the hills! Naething is mine!” said Faith, positively. “And if my life were needfu’ to Davie, my life isna my ain, either. There are twa blessed souls in heaven that hae my promise for that much. Archie, my dear, dear lad, you surely willna be the ane to ask me to break it!”

“No, I’ll ne’er ask you to break it; but Faith,” and he spoke almost angrily, “it is a’ nonsense! Davie will ne’er be any thing but an innocent, and I dinna like to stand second to him.”

“You stand in your ain place first, and alane. I never had a lover before you, I shall never hae any after you. But Davie I took frae my dying mother’s breast wi’ a solemn charge, and frae my dying fayther’s hand wi’ a solemn promise. That charge, and that promise I will break for nane living. If you can share it wi’ me, if you can help me to keep it, I’ll be a happy woman, and a faithful wife to you. If

that is na in your mind, the sooner we each gae our ain way and the better it will be in the end I'm thinking."

But Archie at the sight of her grand resolute face became his best self. "I'll do a' you ask o' me, Faith," he said. "There is naething I willna do to pleasure you. There is nane I willna love for your sake."

And their talk was so sweet, so full of confidence and of good resolves, that Archie really thought no man had ever been so happy as he was, when Faith stood at the gate with him saying a loving lingering good-by, in the light of the splendid harvest-moon.

Phemie was locking up the presses and doors of the house when she returned to it; and Faith was pained by her silent, sorrowful manner. "There is to be neither secrets, nor ill-will between you and me, Phemie, and sae sit down, and listen, and I will tell you what Archie and I hae settled on."

Phemie listened, but with a grim and unbelieving face. "Sae he is coming here?" she asked.

"It is the best for a'. He is doing right

weel, he says, but what need to spend siller furnishing anither hame? ”

“ Him, doin’ weel ! ” she cried scornfully. “ Him doin’ weel ! He is always at a loose end ! He is the maist careless shepherd on the fells ! He could mak’ his will on his thumb nail if he died to-night ; and his gude sense would be dear at a groat ! And I’ll tell you the truth for once aboot Archie Renwick—he’s mair aften in the change-house than in any ither place ; singing, and laughing, and drinking, and quarreling, and never quiet till he is lying under a table, or in a hedge-bottom. Him doin’ weel ! Ridic’lous ! Perfectly ridic’lous ! ”

“ You hae ta’en an ill-will at Archie, Phemie ; and there is nae use heeding you. But an auld woman like you should hae some charity, and scorn to let her tongue serve the clash and clatter o’ the country-side.”

“ Hear-you-but ! Clash and clatter ! Deed ma’am, my tongue is my ain, and I’m too auld to mak’ it call black white ; and evil gude. But I hae warned you, though I ken weel you’ll tak’ your ain way whatever road it leads you. I see that fine ! Sae, if you hae made up your mind to hae his love, and sup sorrow wi’ it,

heed but ane word I say—keep the staff in your ain hand, dinna let him hae power o'er the vallidom o' a thimble."

And Faith, sad and sighing, went up-stairs without further argument. The human heart flies from renunciation, and this night, at least, she was thoroughly tired with her share of earth's unrest. But the sea is not fuller of water, than the heart of a loving woman of hope, long-suffering, trust and forgiveness. What infinite treasures must love possess, to squander them so continually and so lavishly upon the unworthy!

CHAPTER VI.

LORD GRAEME'S LOVE.

“ Love gives esteem and then he gives desert ;
He either finds equality or makes it ;
Like death he knows no difference in degrees,
But plains and levels all.” —DRYDEN.

“ All love is sweet,
Given or returned. Common as light is love
And its familiar voice wearies not ever.”

ONE evening about a week after this event Faith was compelled to go to Mosskirtle. She did not take Davie with her. There had been several days of heavy rain, and the night-fall promised to be chill and misty. Some sudden domestic necessity had induced the walk, and she had had no opportunity of sending Archie word. But she was almost certain to meet him in the village, and with this conviction in her heart, she began her walk.

Arrived at Mosskirtle she made the few purchases she needed at the village shop, and then

turned homeward again, a little depressed. She had seen nothing of her lover but as she passed the change-house, a man standing at the door went in, and she had the conviction, that he knew Archie was there, and had gone to tell him of her presence in the village. She walked a little slower, hoping that her lover would overtake her, but after going a few hundred yards she still found herself alone. The road both before and behind her was enveloped in mist, chilly, damp and depressing. It had driven the very children from their play in the streets, and she suddenly pulled her plaid closer around her breast and began to hurry her footsteps.

Her heart was heavy and pained. It was useless to reason with and tell it that she had not one particle of any kind of proof that Archie was in the change-house, and knew that she was walking home in the fast gathering shadows alone. A woman is more influenced by what she divines than by what she is told. Faith knew he was in the change-house, knew that he was aware she had just passed it. What she was uncertain about was her lover's motive for neglecting her. Perhaps he had

taken a glass too much; was "a little fresh," and rather ashamed of the condition; or perhaps he had been twitted about his attentions to her; and—she did not like to think it; and yet, such a vain man as Renwick might be annoyed by the banter.

She was quick-witted enough to fancy the bent of the conversation that had made him show the silly chaps around him that he was his ain master, and not bound to run after any woman. Tom Ogle would be saying, "steady yoursel', Archie Renwick! There is Faith Harribee passing, and if ye dinna rin after her you'll be missing her bit o' siller." And Dick of Linton would add, "Rin, man! rin! or you'll ne'er come into the charge o' Harribee." And if Tom of Out-by was within hearing he would remember the sharp words said to him last week about driving sheep too long adrift, and he'd be sure to growl out wi' a sneer, "Run awa', Archie! If you dinna lackey my lady you'll be in for a whiff-whaff o' her sharp temper. I can tell you a' she gave me a reg'lar *sisserara* not a week gone by, for being a wee bit hurrysome with the young sheep."

Oh, she knew it all, as well as if she had

heard every little jeering word and laugh, and she understood Archie's false shame and affected independence. If he should deny every word of her suspicion, she felt that it would be very hard to put away her own convictions, and believe him. Occupied with such thoughts she did not perceive that she had taken the shortest way home, the way that led her across the moss. During the summer months it was her usual route, but after the last week's rains its safety was a very serious question.

She stood a moment to consider herself. The misty evening gloom had stolen over all the landscape. It was a lonely, mournful scene, and its silence smote sadly upon her heart. But as she turned her face to Harribee, the lights of the farm-house twinkled suddenly through the foggy shadows. The road she was on was the nearest road to its homely comfort. To take the safer one she would have to go back at least a quarter of a mile. After a moment's pause she went boldly forward.

"Faith! Faith Harribee! Turn back! For your life, turn back! Do not stop to think! Turn at once."

The words were hoarse and passionate, and cut the thick air like a voice of fate. They were uttered in a shout full of the agony of fatal apprehension and of mortal terror, and Faith, trembling and sick at heart, glanced at her feet. Rapid as thought she perceived her danger. The ground was quaking and settling beneath her. To stand still was to be buried alive. Quick as a flash of light she turned, and with difficulty lifting her feet, leaped from tussock to tussock of peat with the same rapidity and power which had once before carried her safely along Johnston's Scaur in the terror of that fatal snow-storm. All the time, the same voice was urging and hurrying her, and when at length she stood panting and trembling on the solid stony road, a hand grasped her shoulder tightly, and a man said in tones equally blent in love and anger:

“Oh, Faith! Faith! A woman like you to be such a fool! You ought to be ashamed of yourself! Oh, Faith, if I had seen you sink into the moss! You have made me sick with terror, woman!”

His voice had a sob in it. He seemed almost as much overcome as Faith, and she was blind

and tottering, and on the very verge of losing consciousness. They stood together; he had passed his arm around her, and drawn her tightly to his side, and for some moments she was only aware of needed support, and quite unable to resist that which was offered her.

But very quickly she recovered herself, and her first movement was to look at her companion. In the dim light his eyes glowed and shone like stars, and pain and joy struggled on his countenance. With burning cheeks she withdrew herself from his embrace.

"Lord Graeme, you hae saved my life. I thank you baith for mysel' and for the laddie that is dearer than life to me."

"Confusion, Faith! Do you think I saved you for Renwick? I saved you for myself. You belong to me now, Faith."

"You mistake me. I was meaning my puir wee brother Davie."

"I am glad of that, Faith. Yet the fools around here say you are going to marry Renwick. I thought better of you than to believe it—a wild, drunken, loose-at-end, go-down-hill, afternoon-farmer."

"I am going to marry Renwick, lord, sae

dinna miscall him to me. I'm no caring to listen to you, and I must be hurrying hame. Davie will be needing me. But I'm vera grateful to you. You were God's messenger to me. I'll ne'er forget this hour."

"Stay, Faith, you shall not go yet, unless I may walk with you. If I am God's messenger to-night, you must listen to me. I want you. I want you for my wife. You can make a good man of me. Upon my soul, I will be a good husband to you. Come like an angel to castle Graeme and bring a nobler life with you. I know I have been an ill man; but I'll be a good man, if you will help me."

"There's nane but God can help you to turn an ill life into a gude life. Nane but God, Graeme. I canna be your wife. It would be a wrong all around—a wrong to you and to your sister; a wrong to mysel' and to my wee brother; a wrong to Renwick for I hae given him my troth-word and I love him, and dinna love you."

"You do love me, Faith; I know you do. My soul knows your soul. Whether you believe me or not, you are mine."

"Graeme, Graeme, dinna say such awfu'

words. I love God. Hoo then can I love you?"

"How can you tell that God does not love me?"

"You said yoursel" that you were an ill man. I was wrang to judge you anyway. Forgie me, and let me take the hame road."

"Let me walk with you."

"Na, na! Folks will say wrang o' me."

"It is dark now."

"All the waur. What I wouldna do at the noon hour, I wouldna do at the dark hour."

"Then stand here until I have had my say. If you will not be my wife, at least let me warn you against Renwick. He is as bad a man as I am—in a ruder way. He has wasted all the money his decent father left him. He is marrying you in the hopes of controlling the Har-ribee property."

"I canna credit what you say, lord. Some ane has told you lies. Every body is against Archie. The mair reason I should stand by him."

"Faith, I hold a bond over every thing he once possessed. When I choose to draw it tight, he will walk out of Shepherd's Bush poorer than he will be on his death-day."

“Maybe, lord, he’ll be richer than mortal man can count on his death-day. He comes o’ pious folk, and I hae that hope for him.”

“God-a-mercy, woman! Cannot you see that you are going to wed sorrow, and shame, and poverty? Oh, Faith! listen to me! I love you. Renwick loves himself—himself only. If you will marry me, then we will take that poor little brother of yours to the best doctors in all the world. In London, Paris and Vienna there are men whose wonderful skill can be bought for money. I will not spare gold. If it be possible, he shall have his full senses back again.”

“If God will. But I thank you mair for what you hae said, than for my ain life. Maybe if I hadna had the wherewith your words would hae been a sair temptation to me; but God be thankit, Davie’s fayther left lying siller, and plenty o’ it, to pay doctors—and I hae a bit siller mysel’ if it also were needed.”

“You will not have siller long if you marry Renwick, Faith, think of what a pleasure it would be to the child to travel all over the world. If any thing can quicken his numb faculties, it is travel and change.”

"Oh Graeme! Dinna tempt me to do wrang that gude may come. It never comes that gate to be worth any thing. God bless you, lord, for what you hae done and offered this night, but you mustna hinder me langer now."

"And you are determined to marry Renwick?"

"I hae said sae."

"Then you will marry a beggar. Not another hour of mercy will I give him. Any ill deed that I can do to him, you may be sure it will pleasure me to do."

"Forewarned is forearmed, lord. You arena God Almighty, and you can but gae as far as you are let gae."

"Once more, Faith! dear Faith! sweet Faith! Once more I entreat you to be my wife."

"Gude night, Lord Graeme. I must take my ane way, and you canna walk with me in it. You would hae to be born again afore we two could be weel matched. Gude-night, lord."

"Remember, Faith, that I have saved your life. I have a claim on you that no other human being has; besides, I love you, Faith."

He said the words slowly, and with a soft, tender intonation that moved her more than she

would acknowledge, and all the way home she was in a condition full of a strange turmoil, troubled, and angry, and fearful, and yet deeply grateful to God, and not insensible to the unmistakable affection of her preserver.

Phemie had become very anxious about her. "I was feared for the moss," she explained. "You hae crossed it a few times this summer, and I misdoubted you wad be trying it again."

"Had it not been for Lord Graeme I had been smooored in it this vera hour. Summer or winter, I'll cross it nae mair." Then she told Phemie the whole circumstance, and Phemie listened without a comment.

"You are wet-shod, Faith. If you dinna want to get your death frae the moss, ane way or tither, change your stockings and shoon, and I'll mak' you a cup o' tea and toast you a jannock."

"Where is Davie?"

"Whar he ought to be; in his bed and fast asleep."

As she was drinking her tea, Phemie said: "I thocht you reckoned on Renwick coming hame wi' you?"

"I ne'er saw him."

“Ay.”

Then there was a long pause, and Faith sipped her tea and Phemie knit her stocking. Only the tick, tick, of the clock broke the silence. But Phemie saw that Faith's hands trembled, and that she was unusually flushed and excited. She did not press, however, for her confidence, and Faith, probably because she was not asked, very soon told all that Lord Graeme had said to her.

Phemie was not astonished. She had been long aware of Graeme's affection, and she answered: “Ay, you might be sure he wad speak up for himsel' wi' such a gude opportunity to help him. Howe'er, when a woman has the offer o' two bad husbands, she ought at least to tak' the best o' the twa, and I'm no sure but the best is Graeme.”

“If you had an opinion about Archie, Phemie, I would try to convince you how unjust you are. But you are just prejudiced, and wha can conquer a prejudice? I'll no try to do it any mair. I dinna believe I am deceived in Archie. If I thocht I was, I should be miserable.”

“Not you. It isna being deceived that troubles a woman i' love ; it is being undeceived.

That's what mak's her miserable. But hold your ain a wee, Faith; you are a wise lass, and if at the lang end sorrow comes to you, there's aye one gude thing to think o'—great trials teach us great lessons."

"I dinna set much by such comfort as that, Phemie. Oh, woman! you are but a Job's comforter. You might whiles hae a cheery word to say to an axious troubled heart."

"Weel, then, Faith, I'll gie you a few o' your auld fayther's words, and whether your lover be gude or bad, you may lippen to them—
'turn your face to God, and you have found the sunny side of life.'"

While this conversation was going on, Lord Graeme was talking to his sister on the same subject. The adventure of the evening had moved him even more than it had moved Faith. He went home full of a new project; one which had sprung naturally from Faith's assertion that their marriage would be a wrong both to himself and to Miss Graeme. He was confident that Faith was afraid of his sister; awed by her position, her domineering manner, even by her beauty, and the devotion of her life to himself.

Then he must induce Terres to go and plead his cause. The plan at first thought seemed to him an impossible one, but it is the impossible in our lives which is most likely to occur, and the more Lord Graeme thought of the feelings likely to exist between his sister and his love, the more sure he was that only Terres could remove the secret obstacles in Faith's mind.

When he reached the castle it was quite dark outside, but several of the rooms were full of light, and in one of them Terres sat at the piano, singing. For several years she had very rarely played, and it seemed to Lord Graeme that it was half a life-time since he had heard her singing. A woesome little ballad it was that now broke the silence—the “good-night” of one of her own ancestors flying for life into exile, in order to avoid the punishment of his bloody passionate hatred—a ballad steeped in evil and sorrowful memories, and yet he could not choose but stand and listen to the verse she was rendering, so charming were the weird notes of masterful affection and threat :

“ Then he took off a gay gold ring,
Whereat hung signets three,
Here tak' thee that my ain dear thing
And still hae mind o' me.

But if thou choose another lord
Ere I come owre the sea,
His life has but a three days lease
Though I may not stay with thee."

"Terres, why do you sing such an unlucky ditty? Nobody but a Scot will date from a misfortune, or sing of sorrow. There are plenty of happier songs."

"I like this song. It blends with things in my own soul that I can interpret in no other way."

"But why to-night?"

"Because to-night I met Will Forster."

Lord Graeme's first thought was a scornful and angry one, and the answer upon his lips was to express this thought. But the memory of Faith restrained it. If he desired his sister's sympathy, he would be both wise and kind to give what he asked. So he restrained the unkind words, and inquired with a gloomy curiosity and interest concerning the meeting. "I went riding, early this evening. In the little wood that skirts the moss, there is, you know, only a very narrow bridle path. The spot was a favorite rendezvous for Will and me in the old days; I am still foolish enough to like to visit it. I was thinking of Will, and all at once I saw

him in the path. He stood aside to let me pass, and as our eyes met, I said 'Will.' Then he lifted his hat and passed on without a word. Passed on without a word, Tilbert. I thought I should fall from my horse. I turned sick. I felt as if I were going blind. But I forced my soul to bear it all. I said to it, 'Don't be a coward! A mean coward, and sneak away into oblivion! Whatever is to bear, bear it.' Then I was at the gate and Gill rode forward and opened it, and I said to him with as little concern as I could affect, "Who is the gentleman we passed?" and he answered, 'Lord Seaton.'"

"Then Forster has come to the title! Who could have supposed that possible?"

"He was related to the Seatons. Of course he concluded that I was now anxious to conciliate him. No wonder he snubbed my advance. Oh, Tilbert, I feel so bitterly ashamed."

"I will call upon Lord Seaton. I will take all the blame. It was my fault, Terres."

"No, no, no! Not to save my life should you make a shadow of concession now. That would be too humiliating."

"The humiliation would be mine."

“Oh Tilbert you look at every thing as it affects you personally! Can not you understand how I feel without my putting my feelings into words? And how can you offer courtesy to Lord Seaton you refused to Captain Forster? It was so unfortunate! So unfortunate I spoke to him! I shall never forgive myself!”

“We are an unfortunate house about love matters.”

She rose wearily and said, “That is an old story. Come, let us have tea. I have been waiting for you.”

He gave her his arm and they went into a small parlor on the other side of the hall, a pretty room curtained and upholstered in rose-colored brocade and lighted by hanging lamps under pink shades. The brilliant color was a remarkable background for both brother and sister, and their pale faces and black shining eyes, their rich silk and fine broadcloth, made telling contrasts with it; to which the blazing fire, gay china, and bright silver added picturesque gleams of shifting color.

Lord Greame did not immediately introduce his own love trouble. He thought it best to let Terres “talk out” the unusual event that

had happened to her. But when this was done, and the meal finished, and the room quite quiet, he roused her from the reverie in which she sat by remarking :

“ It must be a fate night with the Graemes. I also have had an adventure. Faith Harribee would be dead and buried at this moment but for me. She was on the quaking moss, and I saved her. That is a claim she can not deny.”

Terres did not answer the remark, but reclining in her chair, she watched her brother's face with a very unusual interest. Something in her own heart made her in that hour understand the longing and the suffering in his heart. And this unexpected tolerance was aided by several considerations inclining her toward a calm discussion, at least, of his hopes and wishes. He had given her attention and sympathy, it was difficult to refuse him an equal courtesy. And there could be no better way of convincing Lord Seaton that station and wealth were not “ the all and the wherefore ” of her conduct, than by heartily endorsing her brother's humble choice. So, as these thoughts flashed through her mind, she remained silent, but not aggressively silent.

Indeed, there was so much of reasonable

interest in her face that Graeme rose eagerly to his feet, and standing before her asked, "Is it possible you are going to help me, Terres?"

"I was thinking what strange misfortune has always clung to the loves of our house. Suppose we try and make one true love run straight to a happy consummation. If it were possible we might break the evil spell. 'Ill fortune slips awa' when love smiles' is an old saying, but yet—"

"Nay, do not qualify your kindness with a 'but.' Promise me to go and see Faith."

"If you wish it, I will go."

"And when? To-morrow? Go to-morrow, Terres."

"I will go to-morrow—in the morning."

"My good sister! And if there is any word to be said, any thing a man may do, to be done about Seaton—"

"If you meet him, give him his own courtesy—the lifted hat and silence. I shall never forgive you if you take one step toward him."

"He may still love you."

"Less love than the old love I would never accept. The old love would have held my bridle, and found some words to say for itself.

I am not the same Terres Graeme to Will, and when a woman is not the same to her lover, she may as well be the most indifferent of women to him. My past is slain beyond healing or recovery ; there may perhaps be something done to make your future happy. And after all, who is so dear to me as you are, Tilbert? And why should you not have the wife you want? The Graeme ennobles any one he marries. And she stood up beside her brother, looking into his face with shining eyes ; while he drew her within his arm, and answered.

“ I have you always, Terres. I have the best sister in the world. If any one else fails me, I have Terres.”

CHAPTER VII.

TERRES AND FAITH.

“Eighty years hence it will matter little whether we were a peasant or a peer, but it will matter much, whether we did our duty as one or the other.”—STOPFORD BROOKE.

“Time, the shuttle drives, but you
Give to every thread its hue
And elect your destiny,” —BURLEIGH.

THE next morning was clear and frosty, and Terres Graeme prepared for her visit by a long solitary walk over Dead-for-cold hill. She was on its bushless track absolutely alone. There was no trace of man, of plowing, nor planting, nor building. All around her the hill-tops followed each other in wavy outlines, rising, falling, blending, until her eyes rested on the long soft lines of a sea of hills, whose tops steadfast and motionless, seemed, as the vision were carried along them, to be undulating and moving—an earth-ocean lying in the deep blue haze of the borders.

It was a grand council chamber for a restless,

unhappy soul, and Terres was insensibly softened and elevated by her walk through it. She was distinctly conscious of a great change in the spiritual atmosphere when she reached Mosskirtle with its queer jumble of low gray houses, every house standing alone; every house looking to a different quarter; all of them keeping an air of watching, as if it were still necessary to keep a constant eye upon the English border.

She had ordered her carriage to be in waiting here for her, and in half an hour she was at Harribee Home. There was no drive through the garden; it was necessary to alight at the wicket, and walk up the central path to the front door. So Faith saw her coming, and she went to meet her.

“I am an unusual visitor, Miss Harribee.”

“You are vera welcome. Come in.”

For a moment she stood with the handle of the best-parlor door in her hand, then she said, “it is but a cold-like and gloomy room. The houseplace and the fire will be better, I’m thinking.”

“A great deal better. I am chill and tired. I came over Dead-for-cold-hill.”

“Whate’er sent you that road, Ma’am? It is a lonely bit to travel,—and bleak and eerie.”

“But how cozy and comfortable is this place!” and she sank with an air of real enjoyment into the large cushioned chair which Faith placed for her on the very edge of the sheep-skin rug. The large room was exquisitely clean; the fire was blazing high up the wide chimney, and the table running along the room beneath the two windows was piled with clean linen which Faith was sprinkling and folding ready for the iron.

Davie lay upon the rug, building sheep-folds with some colored blocks, and when Miss Terres spoke to him, he turned his wistful blue eyes upon her and seemed to be greatly impressed by her fine appearance. Proud and passionate as she was, Terres Graeme had a womanly pity for the boy. She had heard of his calamity, and when he touched softly her satin gown, and the white minever with which it was trimmed, she stooped and kissed him.

The action touched Faith in a way she did not try to understand. Tears came to her eyes, and to hide them she turned to the linen and began sprinkling it. Terres was fascinated by her grace and beauty, and especially by the

sense of strength and tenderness which diffused itself around her like an atmosphere. There was a few minutes' silence, during which Terres watched her scattering the drops of water over the lawn kerchiefs she was folding. Then she said,

"Do not stay your work for me. I like to watch you at it. Faith Harribee, I have no doubt that you can guess why I have called to see you this morning."

"Would you be sae kind, ma'am, as to tell me why? I am gay stupid at guessing things."

"I came to tell you that I do really wish you to listen to what Lord Graeme says. I will gladly give you a sister's welcome, Faith. Do not refuse my brother because you fear me."

"There is naething to fear me anent you, Miss Graeme. I dinna think o' fearing man nor woman."

"What then hinders? Is not Graeme handsome, rich, noble, every thing that women desire? He can make you a great lady. I am sure he will make you happy."

"Honors and riches canna buy a true heart. Miss Graeme—and I'm no caring for them. Like the happy Shunammite woman of old, 'I

dwel among my 'ain folk'; and there isna court nor castle can do mair for me than that. Forbye, I dinna love Lord Graeme. There is anither one. I'll no be feared to speak his name—'tis Archie Renwick, and I am promised to him—and I love him wi' all my heart. You'll be to ken what that means, surely, Miss Graeme. A woman like you must hae had lovers and must hae loved some ane o' them. You'll ken then that a true woman canna play fast and loose wi' her heart."

"But if the man you love is unworthy of you, Faith: I assure you that Renwick is not fit to latch the buckles on your shoes."

"Still, I hae set him high in my heart, ma'am. If nane but the worthy were loved there would be many a starved heart in this warld. I ken naething wrang o' Archie, and I dinna want to ken wrang o' him. Most folks hae some faults." Then she turned from the table and looked steadily at Terres. "You hae a true face, Miss Graeme. I think if you loved ance, you would love the same man for life—him, and nae ither. It is sae wi' me too."

"You are quite right, Faith—him and no other."

“ But indeed, ma’am, you mustna think I am not gratefu’ for your kindness, and for Lord Graeme’s liking. We may be pleased wi’ the offer we dinna think it right to tak’; and I’ll no say but what I am vera much pleased, mair especial wi’ your ain gude will in the matter.”

‘And you will not listen to my brother, then?’

“ Archie’s voice is in my ear. I can hear nae ither voice for it.”

“ Graeme would be good to this poor boy. Last night he was talking to me of the great surgeons in London and Paris who might do something for him.”

“ That is the greatest temptation mortal man can gie me; but folk mustna do ill for the chance of some possible gude. God has plenty better roads than that ane—and when Davie is a bit stronger, if there is help on earth for him he sall have it.”

Then Miss Graeme rose, and Faith turned from her work and stood beside her. Into her clear steadfast eyes Terres looked with a long questioning gaze. “ I want such a friend as you could be, Faith Harribee; may I come and see you often?”

“You’ll be welcome, Miss Graeme; for there is that and this to talk about, without spending mair words on what it is useless to even think of.”

“You mean we are not to speak again of Lord Graeme’s love for you?”

“That is just what I mean, ma’am. From me one no is as gude as a hundred; and the thing I mean to-day I’ll be likely to mean to the vera day o’ my death.”

They were walking together down the garden as these words were uttered, and Terres did not answer them. She stepped into her carriage in a sudden gloom; and being quite unused to control her feelings, she made no effort to conceal the sadness and indifference which had taken possession of her. Faith thought she was offended, for to her farewell smile she made no return save a slight movement of the head as she drove away.

Yet nothing was further from the truth. She had received during her visit an insight into a life which she might have led. She was unhappy and occupied with her own reflections, and by force of long habit, not able to put aside personal feelings even for the sake of those whom she really liked.

Her dark face troubled Graeme as soon as he saw it. "You have been cross, Terres," he said fretfully. "I might have known it. I dare say you have contrived to frighten Faith to death!"

"I was not cross with her. She is a grand woman, but she is not for you."

He pulled two chairs to the hearth, and in her bonnet and mantilla she sat down, and reviewed her visit to Faith with him. Graeme however refused to believe in Faith's resolution.

"A woman gets tired of saying no. I shall not get tired of asking her to say yes. I mean to marry Faith Harribee."

"She will not marry you."

"Yes, she will."

"She told me she would marry that man who is farming Shepherd's Bush."

"He won't farm Shepherd's Bush much longer. Thanks be! I have him under my hand and he shall feel the weight of it."

"I don't blame you. I wish I had Will Seaton under my hand."

"Pooh! For what good? You would have a hard cry and then forgive him."

"Would I? You know better."

“Renwick is a weak miserable creature. To think of such an animal pretending to the love of a woman like Faith Harribee! He is forever in some public house singing senseless, raiding, riding songs; he is never on the hills. Lately he has done nothing but dangle after Lander’s pretty daughter. Shepherd’s Bush has gone to rack and ruin in his care.”

“If Faith knew these things?”

“She shall know them. A score of tongues on every side shall tell her, and if in spite of all warnings she still marries him, then—”

“Then, what?”

“She may sup the sorrow she is so vain and foolish to brew. I’ll not lift a finger for Archie Renwick’s wife.”

Unfortunately, there was only too much truth in Graeme’s accusations. But the heart as well as the understanding has its arguments, and Faith’s heart found plenty of excuses for her lover that her understanding did not always approve. Archie’s great temptation was one she did not comprehend, one of which she was totally ignorant, and which therefore she had no power to charm away. It lay in his hatred of Davie. He had indeed made spasmodic

attempts to conquer the unnatural sin, but, in spite of them, he found his dislike and jealousy stronger and bitterer every day. And never is hatred so unreasonable and so pitiless as when it is nursed against helpless childhood. Cruel people do to babes whom they dislike such spiteful and barbarous injuries as they never would think of inflicting upon men. Therefore, no hatred is so devilish and corrupting to the moral nature as the hatred cherished against the helpless.

Archie was himself often terrified at the wicked thoughts which tormented him about the unfortunate boy whom he had regarded as standing in the way of his prosperity. To find himself wishing Davie in the grave, and to suddenly arrest his thoughts in the middle of some infamous scheme for compassing such a result was a personal experience daily becoming more and more familiar to him. And when men are in such sore straits of temptation, if they don't pray, they drink.

Archie drank. At that time in Scotland, drinking was a crime so common as to have lost all moral significance. The noble and the peasant, the merchant and the artizan, the kirk

member as well as the despiser of ordinances, all alike drank, and were not ashamed of the fact, unless they permitted their dissipation to interfere with their business obligations, or to waste their substance. It was only the strict sect to which Faith belonged who really seemed to believe that "no drunkard shall enter the kingdom of heaven," and even it winked at irregularities in this matter, which if transferred to dancing or merry-making would have brought a kirk session upon the offender.

So the days came and went, and they appeared to be in the main, just like one another. But Archie with his omissions and regrets, his variable moods, his constant slips into sensual mire, his despairs, his tempers, and his promises, made every fresh day to Faith's inner life a day apart; a day with its own special hopes and fears and disappointments.

She did not weary of helping him. She was never petted or angry. Her nature was too even and grand to worry or to fret. It was Archie who wearied first. It was Archie who became irritable and cross, and hard to live with, even an hour at a time. Ashamed of his own continual failures, irritated by his own

inabilities, Faith's pure, regular, busy life, and tender forbearance, made him angry. She was strong, and he was weak ; she was ever gaining, he was ever losing, in every way the conditions of love were reversed, and Archie was beginning to loathe the circumstances which always placed him in a humiliating position.

Still Faith never thought of deserting him. Her'troth was to her as sacred a thing as marriage. It did not even strike her that Archie came much less frequently to Harribee. "It was winter and the snow lay deep ;" she found plenty of excuses for every broken promise. She was preparing for her wedding, and she went calmly on spinning her household linen and plenishing. As the months went on she began to talk of her bridal, of the manner in which it was to be solemnized, and of the dress she intended to wear.

Phemie listened to her with a grim pity. She longed to tell her all she had heard about AnnieLander, but Faith's own heart was so true, it was impossible to drop a seed of suspicion into it. Only once did Phemie try to do so.

"I met Archie Renwick and Annie Lander last night, Faith, when I was at the village."

“Ay! Whereabouts?”

“Just ayont the auld brig. There was a dance at Lilburn’s farm, and they were awa’ thegither to it. Hech! but she is a bonnie lass!”

“I hae heard that, many times. Weel, weel, bonnie lasses must hae some youth. I hae thocht whiles, that our ain Agnes was keepit’ too close and tight. Annie Lander would be safe enough with Archie. He told me that he and Lander were fast friends.

“I dinna think Archie should gae up and down Esk Water wi’ every bonnie lass he can pick up. He is as gude as a marrit man, and he hasna been to see you for near a week gane.”

“I’m making nae complaint, Phemie, and Archie doesna run after a’ the pretty girls by Esk; you shouldna say such things, Phemie. I would hae little opinion o’ myself, if I was feared o’ Archie takin’ a friend’s daughter to a farm dance. You’ll mind, the Landers are newcomers in Mosskirtle. I think it vera kind o’ Archie. He’ll be telling us a’ about it, when he get’s o’er the moor again.”

And Phemie looked at her calm face, which yet had some shadow of trouble in it, and put

back the rest of the words she had determined to say. "There will be nae use in them," she thought, "meeting trouble is just gaeing into the enemy's country. There isna a single promise gi'en us for such a useless fool-hardy journey. There's a time to speak, and a time to forbear speaking—and its maistly, if you are a prudent body—the time to forbear speaking."

Then spring-time came again, and Faith was very busy. The lambing season took her very often up the fells, for her special duty was to look after those lambs too weak to follow their mothers, or who, from any cause, had been left lonely and hungry on the windy hills. There was not a day in which she did not carry down in her own arms several of these deserted little ones to be fed and cared for at the Home.

Late one Sabbath evening she was coming down the Catter fell with a couple in her plaid neuk. She held them firmly in her strong arms. Their little heads were against her breast. Davie was at her side. She came rapidly onward with the springy steps of one born on the heather. The rosy light of the setting sun made a kind of glory, in which she moved with a swift grace that was wonderful.

Lord Graeme counted it a great fortune that he was passing that way, and saw this vision of womanhood. It inspired in him a kind of religion. He felt for the moment an irrepressible sentiment of praise and gratitude to the Maker of a being so beautiful and gracious.

“Faith!” he cried, “Oh, how I love you! How I envy the little creatures in your arms! How I envy the very heather and benty grass that feels your steps! I never hoped for a joy like this when I left the castle. I was going only to treat myself to a sight of your home, and I have seen you also! Let me be thankful!”

“Lord Graeme dinna talk to me that way. It isna right, and I’ll no listen to you. And you ken weel that you shouldna be riding just for your ain pleasure upon the Sabbath day.”

“And what then are you doing on the hills? Was it to meet Renwick you went up Catterfell?”

“I am saving life, lord. I canna let the wee things perish on the hill-side.”

“Of course not. You can have pity on a lamb—a lamb can be sold for something—but a man is such a common creature. I am dying

for a kind word, Faith. When will you have pity on me?"

"I am a' the same as a married woman, lord. You should think shame o' yourself to say such words. Let me pass you, for the lambs are cauld and hungry."

"You are not the same as married, Faith. Renwick will never marry you. Mind what I say."

"Then, lord, I'll think nae kinder o' you for being sae ill a prophet. This isna a day for me to be minding myself, and I'll no speak another word on the matter."

"Good-night then, Faith. You can not prevent me from thinking about you."

"Dinna mix me up then wi' any ill thochts, lord. Hae that much care o' me, ony way."

"Upon my honor you ask a grand thing, and I'll try and keep your charge, Faith."

He had dismounted from his horse when he saw her approaching, and he stood beside it while he spoke. With the last words he mounted and rode slowly away, taking the only road which permitted him to watch Faith until Phemie met her at her own gate, and the two women, with the two lost lambs faintly bleating, disappeared in the home fold.

CHAPTER VIII.

FAITH'S DARK HOUR.

“ Measure thy life by loss instead of gain,
Not by the wine drunk but the wine poured forth.”

“ Yet this one thing I learn to know
Each day more surely as I go,
That I am glad the good and ill
By changeless laws are ordered still
Not as I will.”

H. H.

THE Spring had opened early with some fine warm days, but it betrayed its promise around Esk Water, and delayed long its full fruition. So Faith had much anxious care and many long walks concerning her flocks, which, however, in spite of the chilly nights and damp days, prospered wonderfully.

One night, near the end of April, she came home very weary. It is the heart holds up the body, and Faith's heart had been heavy for nearly a week, during which space Archie had not been at the farm. She was afraid he had

heard of her interview with Graeme on the previous Sabbath, for the hatred was not upon one side ; Archie returned his landlord's dislike very heartily.

On this night she was alone on the fells. Davie was not with her ; he had been ailing lately, and the air was foggy and chilly, so her own fearful thoughts were her only companions. As she entered the kitchen upon her return, Phemie looked through the house-place door with a face full of suppressed excitement :

"You are welcome home, Faith, and look you here ! Carrier Joe has left a box for you. It's frae London or some foreign pairt, I'm thinking."

"A box !"

Such a thing had never happened to Faith before. She started up instantly to go to it.

"You're wet shod, ma'am, and you'll be to change your shoon first."

There was no denying the old woman's positive manner, nor yet the justice of her direction, so Faith not only complied with it, but also removed her plaid and bonnet, and gave her usual directions about the milk for the young lambs. Then she felt at liberty to satisfy

her curiosity. The box was a large deal box, secured with bands of iron, and there was much pleasant curiosity exercised in the removal of these bands, and the opening of the lid. The first thing that presented itself to their eager eyes was an exquisite painting of the forgotten Agnes.

The fair flower-like face was so like her mother's face that Faith felt as if she had received both mother and sister back again. She uttered a joyful cry and kissed it over and over with passionate affection. Then she put it in Phemie's hands, and Phemie pressed it to her breast and cried about it as if Agnes were once more a baby in her arms. Agnes had been gone more than eight years, and this was the first token of her remembrance she had sent back to those who had long forgiven but never forgotten her. It was such a wonderful thing to happen ! It was impossible not to be excited and full of joy over it.

Below the picture there was a piece of rich satin, some fine laces and a heavy gold brooch for Faith. Many other beautiful things followed, ornamental and useful, both ; but the presents which touched Faith's heart most

were the books and pictures, and play-things, suitable for a lad of Davie's age, and which had evidently been selected with great care and love. It was a box full of affection as well as of beauty; a box which induced all kinds of pleasant memories, and conversation, and pitiful wonder.

They were still standing over it when Renwick entered. He had been drinking, and was—as Phemie whispered Faith—“much the waur o' it.” What man is ever the better of it? Faith scarcely noticed the warning. She was still in a singular state of happy excitement, and she called out joyfully, “Look you here, Archie! Our bonnie Agnes has sent us a' these braw things! And here, the best o' all, is her ain sweet sel!”

He looked at the gifts in a sullen scornful manner, steadying himself as he stood by leaning against the long oak dresser, his tall sturdy figure looming up against the shelves filled with shining rows of china ware and brass ware.

“You are much set up for naething! A bit painted face! Ay, its gude enou' for her!”

Faith was much grieved; more by the expression given to the words, than by their

actual import; but she refused to notice the ill-nature of the remark, and added:

“Look at this bonnie satin and lace, and the gold brooch forbye! I’ll need to ware no siller now on my wedding dress, Archie. They hae come in a gude time, hae they not?”

Then he struck the dresser a blow with his clenched fist that made the china and brass ring and tremble through all their lengths, and shouted out:

“Nae wife o’ mine shall be wed in a dress bought wi’ money made in the deil’s ain house! I’m not that far gane i’ sin, thank God!”

“You don’t know what you are talking about, Archie!”

“I know fine what I’m talking about, woman! Lander told me that he heard that black-faced deil Graeme saying your sister’s husband was ane o’ the biggest play-actors in London—mair shame to an honest lad like me to hear tell o’—and your sister canna be o’er gude, consorting wi’ such and such like.”

“My sister is my sister,” answered Faith with a calm, proud manner which became her well. “My sister is my sister! Wherever she may be, she can never get beyond God’s love

and mercy. We are a' of us needing that, Archie."

"Folks that sit in play-houses! They are the deil's ain congregation!"

"They may not be any waur in God's sight, Archie, than the folks that sit their senses awa' in change-houses."

Then Phemie, with that passion which is so awesome in the old, said, "Maister Renwick, the whisky is far aboon your wit. And God hasna set the like o' you to be a judge o'er his wandering bairns. If they are God's elect, wha' shall daur to lay aught to their charge? Gae your ways hame, Renwick; you'll hae enough to do to mak' your ain calling and election sure."

"Faith Harribee, you must get rid o' the fools that are around you. I'm no going to bide either o' them"—and he clashed the heavy door behind him and left Faith standing mute and angry and full of trouble over her splendid presents.

It was a cruel ending to such a happy hour. Faith put the brows back into the box without a word; but Phemie noticed that she hung the likeness of Agnes above the hearth at which

she continually sat. The action said definitely to Phemie that she had determined to stand by her sister, no matter what Archie Renwick might say in opposition.

"It is Annie Lander," thought Phemie angrily. "He has kent aboot the play-acting, dootless, ever since Lander came to Mosskirtle; but when he likit Faith and wanted to marry Faith, little his conscience hurt him anent that matter. Deary me! Faults grow thick as love grows thin."

May came in smiling and charming, and the trees were in blossom, and the garden sweet in all its paths with violets and wall-flowers. But Archie came not. Faith watched all the next week for him. She seemed to be doing her housework as cheerfully as usual, but in reality her heart was faint and sick, and she was always covertly watching the road over the fells. Phemie felt for her a true pity, but she had no way to offer her comfort; for Faith was always silent in her sorrow. She never named Archie's absence, never spoke of the quarrel at his last visit, never speculated as to his return, and her reticence closed Phemie's mouth as well.

And it was seldom at this season of the year

Faith went to the village. Even if she had gone every day, there was not a kimmer in it who would have dared to offer her the story of Archie Renwick's devotion to pretty Annie Lander. So, ignorant of the cause of Archie's neglect, Faith judged him by her own heart, and still trusted that sooner or later he would "come and mak' it up again." But in the meantime how wearily went the hours ! Stupid with a dumb sorrow, she had to learn to find her way through a labyrinth of daily cares, hoping, and fearing, and consciously listening through all she said and did, for one voice and one step.

Nearly three weeks passed in this miserable uncertainty. She never thought of sending any letter or message to him. Archie had come into her presence under the control of whisky, and deliberately wounded and offended her. Until he was so conscious of his fault as to be willing to acknowledge it, Faith saw no hope of any pleasant intercourse. But oh ! one look, one word would have been sufficient. Her heart had the pardoning power in plenitude ; she was only waiting, sorrowfully

and lovingly waiting, to forgive the past, and trust him fully again for the future.

One morning she said to Phemie, "I'll no require to be on the fells this day; sae, get me the lettuce and cress seed, and I'll go to the garden and sow them."

"The garden is cauld and wet, forbye there's plenty to see after in the house."

"You're vera short wi' folk this morning, Phemie. What's put you about at a'?"

"Plenty to put me about, inner and outermer. I'm bone-tired o' trying to please folk so to-and-again, they don't know what they want an hour at a time. I'm up to my elbows in work, too, and you talking o' going into the garden."

"Gie me the seeds, Phemie."

"Dinna gae oot, Faith; you'll get cold, lassie. Stay in the house to-day for ony sake."

"I'm minded to sow the seeds. What ails you at a'? You're no like yoursel'."

"Vera weel, ma'am. Tak' your ain way."

A little annoyed and puzzled by Phemie's manner, Faith went down to the beds prepared for the salad plants, and began to sow and to rake. There had been heavy rain, and the air

had that delightfully fresh, clean feeling which follows the clearing up. It blew briskly, though there were sudden gleams of sunshine; and after she had worked herself into a glow that brought a kind of peace with it, she looked up to see what Davie was doing.

He had dropped his spade, and was leaning upon the stone-wall gazing into the green space before him. At such times his childish face had a sorrowful, questioning look that Faith could never endure to see. Whatever work was in her hand, she dropped it and went to him.

“Are you tired, Davie, dear?”

“Ay, Faith, I’m tired like. I’m looking for something, but I canna find it.”

“What is it, Davie?”

“I dinna rightly ken.” His eyes wandered far off to the horizon, and a profound melancholy shadowed his generally happy face. It seemed to Faith as if for once she found herself quite unable to lift her own spirit to that point at which it was able to catch the poor boy’s intelligence. She stood silently by him, watching the great blue eyes that so dimly lighted the veiled soul behind them. Then she was

aware of a man coming slowly across the meadows by Esk Water.

As he approached Harribee he turned his steps towards the gate, and Faith perceived that it was Willie Cavers, the dale piper; a worthless, drinking, good-for-naught, barely tolerated by respectable people.

“Gude morning, mistress. Hoo’s a’ wi’ you?”

“Weel enough, Willie, thank you. You are early astir wi’ your pipes.”

“Late, you mean, mistress. I hae been playing a’ nicht at the bridal at Landers. It was a blythesome bridal, and a bonnie bride.”

“Wha was the bride?”

“Wha but his ain lassie? A bonnie bride she was.”

“I hae heard tell that she is a vera bonnie lass.”

“And she’s gotten a braw lad. Thère isn’t a handsomer lad in the Marches than Archie Renwick.”

“Than wha?”

“Than Archie Renwick, the bridegroom.”

Then Faith walked away and stooped down and began to scatter the seed in the narrow

drill. But her heart was beating as if it would burst, and she felt giddy and trembling. As in a dream she heard the piper talking a few moments to Davie, and then go onward, lilt-
ing his favorite rant. When his voice died away she raised herself slowly, bared her head to the breeze, and white as a ghost stood looking away over the hills. Short, pitiful ejaculations for strength and comfort parted her lips, and ere long, as if in answer to them, Davie came silently to her side, and clasped her hands. Then she stooped, lifted his face between her hands, and kissed him.

“Love me weel now, Davie. Love me weel now, for you are a’ I have.”

She did not weep, and she had no wish to complain. As yet she did not feel as if any human consolation could help her. Phemie she knew would abuse Archie, and side passionately with her, but God would give her comfort, and yet say no word wrong of the lad she had loved and trusted so completely. Without any reference to the piper’s news she went straight to the kitchen and began to bake a batch of riddle-cakes. It was the hardest work she could find to do, and Phemie watched her

beating and kneading the dough, and passing between the table and the fire with rapid steps, until from sheer physical exhaustion she was on the verge of fainting.

The old woman knew well what sorrow was forcing Faith to labor. She made a cup of tea and took it to her. "Sit down a wee, Faith," she said kindly, "drink, dearie ; sorrow is gude for naething but sin."

"You hae heard tell, then, Phemie?"

"Ay, ay. But the vera warst may be tholed when it is sure ; and naething happens but what is sent, or permitted. God's will be done ! You can say that much, Faith?"

"I would think little o' myself if I could not. My ain will was vera sweet to me, Phemie—if—"

"His will is best."

"Ay,—Surely ! His will is best."

It is in hours such as these, that the full grandeur of the old Covenanting creed and spirit reveals itself. In great sorrows it is doubtless a great consolation to completely relinquish our will to God's will. Personal fate and suffering is thus invested with the majesty and sublimity of eternal purpose ; and every day life acquires a dignity of the loftiest

character. Faith bowed her head and her heart to the consolation it offered. Who was she to rebel against that which God had permitted? If it were in His purposes, her duty lay in complete submission to Him.

She was greatly helped also in the struggle before her by her strict sense of what was right and wrong. Archie was now another woman's husband. It was a sin to think of him in any way. Anger was sin. Regret was sin. Above all, love was sin. And she told herself positively that she would have no right to let her disappointment interfere in any way, with the duties entrusted to her. The care of her brother, the care of the flocks and the farm, and of the men and women she employed. She felt clearly that her own private sorrow must not shadow their days or interfere with their welfare. We can not choose our duties any more than we can select our parents, or the locality in which we will be born. There is a divine ordering in such matters, which Faith solemnly recognized and whose claims she was determined to satisfy.

It was not an easy discipline, and perhaps at first, the effect upon Faith was a little repel-

lant. She was silent and self-contained, but not offensively so, and her manners suited her, as hardness suits steel. When sorrow is borne in this spirit, it is like the iron-smith, it shapes as it strikes.

And very soon the busiest time of the year came on. She had no leisure to consider herself in any way. The dairy was full of cream. Never had there been so much butter to make. Then came the haymaking, and the shearing, and the harvest-time, and the weeks were filled to the brim with needful labor.

Faith was soon happy again; undoubtedly happy. Other interests took the place of her false lover—the sheep were doubling on the fells, the barley and oats turning to gold in the meadows, the fleeces had never been so long and fine. Every thing prospered under her care, and Faith had a sufficient vein of Scotch acquisitiveness in her nature to make the fact a very agreeable one. After the summer was over she went into Hawick and put a large sum of money in the bank. It gave her a sense of proud satisfaction, and for the first time, that night, she spoke freely with Phemie of the trial through which she had passed.

"It is over now," she said, "and far better over than I thought possible on that morning Will Cavers brought me the news."

"The deil ne'er found you idle, sae he couldna gie you a bad worrying spell, ma'am."

"I heard Lord Graeme had turned Renwick oot o' house and hame. I'm sorry for him."

"You might easy find fitter folks to pity. I havena sorrow kind about me for him."

"If he could keep away from the whisky! He would be a braw man every other way."

"Tuts! If the bell is cracked anywhere, it is useless everywhere. If, if, if! There are mair sad tales in if than in a' the books that man ever wrote. I hae heard tell that he is not o'er kind to his wife. That is mair than likely for he's sae wavery that his love changes like the seasons. But, for that matter, there's nae love but God's love that is steady enou' to lippen to."

"That is true; likewise Davie and the farm have been wonderful helps. The bairn gets closer to my heart every day; and the crops and the flocks hae been the dale's talk. I never thocht I could hae got sae fond o' dumb cattle and green fields."

“There is aye compensations, ma’am. When we canna get what we love, we vera soon, if we hae sense, learn to love what we hae ; and it’s maist always the best thing for us.”

“Weel, I hae learned three things this summer, Phemie, and I’ll no need to learn them any mair for this life. First, that there is no earthly sorrow that endures. Second, that there is nae earthly pleasure like daily duty weel wrought. Third, that there is nae earthly peace like, “God’s Will be Done.”

CHAPTER IX.

THE WAY ARCHIE WENT.

“ No living lot
So poor but it hath somewhat still to spare
In beauteous odors.”

“ It never yet did hurt
To lay down likelihoods and and forms of hope.”

IT was fortunate for Faith that during this heart struggle she was not in any way embarrassed by Lord Graeme's sympathy or protestations. Just before Renwick's marriage he went abroad with his sister. Miss Terres was sick of some vague disorder, which puzzled her physician. He could think of nothing but change of air and scene, and Lord Graeme thought it was really the best remedy. For he understood, what no one else could do, the love, the shame, the chagrin and the disappointment which had sunk Terres in melancholy indifference, or made her feverish and abnormally restless.

His return home had been hastened in some degree by dissatisfaction with his factor. Lan-

der had fallen more and more under the spell of his dissipated son-in-law ; and the two men were continually keeping each other company in some change-house or other from Moss-kirtle to Hawick. And Graeme was a strict master ; he tolerated neither idleness nor wastrie. His first acts on his return were to dismiss the factor, and “ roup ” the whole effects, household and farming, appertaining to the Shepherd’s Bush farm.

When Faith went to Hawick to bank her increase, she heard on every hand the small details of the two transactions, with such comments as the different opinions of people suggested. Generally, public sympathy was with Graeme. The surrounding farmers and shepherds had little toleration for men who could not mind their business as well as take their glass ; and every one admitted that Lord Graeme had been “ more than patient ” with Archie Renwick.

“ But the Renwicks hae farmed Shepherd’s Bush for four generations,” said the landlady of The Graeme Arms to Faith ; “ and sae, for the sake o’ them that were afore him, my lord has been vera forbearing wi’ the lad.”

Every one had much the same opinion, and every one was as far from the truth as people usually are who imagine they understand the secret motives which interpret their neighbor's actions. Lord Graeme cared nothing at all for the dead Renwicks, and he cordially hated their living representative; but he was afraid that if he were severe, Faith Harribee would visit all Renwick's losses on his head and only love the idle, worthless fellow the more for his faults. And rather than give Renwick that advantage he had borne silently the slow but certain deterioration of the property which he held in bond for his legal dues.

But when he heard the particulars of Archie's marriage his anger blazed with a fury that terrified Lander. In spite of his fierce joy in Faith's freedom, he felt an equally fierce wrath at the boor who had presumed to despise the love of a woman so incomparably his superior. In his eyes no punishment was adequately severe enough for such a fool. It gave him a real joy to seize every cow, and calf, and sheep, and horse upon the place, and to put household goods and farming tools alike under the hammer. The first good night's

sleep that came to him after his return was the night on which he told himself confidently that neither Renwick nor Lander had any home in which to lay their heads.

Yet, though he so passionately admired Faith, so little did he understand her that he believed in thus punishing those who had presumed to offer her a slight, he had done that which would give her pleasure. And though he would have scorned to boast of his quick retribution, he knew that Faith would hear of it, and hoped she, at least, would appreciate the love so ready to perceive and to repay the wrong she had been compelled to bear.

In reality Faith thought little about it. She was occupied with a much more important affair; for she was resolved now to take Davie to London, and the journey was a very serious undertaking to her. Her heart trembled at the prospect; she was full of doubts and fears, and yet driven by a sense of obligation she could not put away.

"Dinna go, ma'am," said Phemie, as she watched Faith looking with a troubled face at the corded box ready for the morning's coach.

"I'm no to mind my ain feelings in this

matter, Phemie. You ken what I promised fayther. A promise to the living may be broken, but a promise to the dead, dool and sorrow on those who dare to break it! Yet I hae a sair misgiving anent Davie, and I hae had dreams one mair fearsome than anither; but toots! why will I be fashing myself about dreams? They are just havers!"

"Deed ma'am, some folk hae mair sense dreaming than waking. I think little o' folk that dinna dream. I think little o' sleep that is just a dozing and a snoring o' pure matter. If you hae been warned o' aught, dinna be sae wise in your ain conceit as to neglect the warning."

"I'll hae to go, Phemie. I tried to make Davie understand, and I think it is his will likewise. I'm feared o' myself. Maybe it is the siller pulling at my wish and will. I canna be wrang if I gae the way my fayther bade me. I canna be wrang in keeping the promise I made him."

So next morning a hurried breakfast was taken at candlelight, and Faith and Davie rode over the moor in the misty dawning to catch the London coach at Mosskirtle. The little lad was delighted with the journey. It was taken

easily for his sake, but at the end of the third day Faith reached the hotel on the Strand which she had been advised to seek. Her preparations had been so carefully perfected that she had little difficulty or delay in securing the consultation of the three great physicians and surgeons, to whom she had decided to submit Davie's case.

He went into their presence a little afraid, but regarding each of them with wide open wondering eyes, as if he were curious about them. They were pitiful and gentle to the boy, but their decision was unanimously hopeless. Nothing could be done for him mentally, and with grave earnestness they pointed out to Faith his rapid growth and the hectic flush and fever which made other conditions physically dangerous. "A warm climate may prolong, or perhaps preserve his life, but in the bleak border uplands he will need the greatest care. A simple cold may be a fatal thing for him."

Such was the verdict, and it was one which gave a shock to Faith. She had noticed that Davie lately had been unable to keep step with her in climbing, but she had attributed the want

of power to his sudden and rapid growth. Consumption had never been in their family. It was the very last disease she thought of for a Harribee. But the danger must be averted; yes, though she left the farm in Phemie's care, and took him herself to the island which the doctors had named.

But the circumstances surrounding such a change were very painful to her. Faith had the home instinct in a very strong degree. She had the money-making faculty equally strong. She felt keenly that her full duty to Davie might bring to her many great trials, and much self-renunciation. On the last day of their return journey Davie was very restless and fretful. He was tired, he said, and his head ached. In an uneasy, tossing fashion, he slept most of the time. Before he reached Moss-kirtle he complained of a sore throat and was so feverish that Faith left word for the village doctor to follow her as soon as possible to Harribee.

About ten o'clock at night he arrived, and Faith and Phemie were sitting anxiously by the child's side who had become delirious. It was a bad case of scarlet fever and from the first

hour of its recognition, there was not a hope. He lingered five days but recovered his consciousness only in that heavenly land where he recovered all else that he had lost.

Faith suffered as mothers suffer. She awoke in the night with his name on her lips. It broke her heart afresh every time she had to bar the door at night, and leave her darling in his cold bed on the fell side. She was constantly coming upon some trifle that had been so precious to him—a faded picture—a ball—a broken pen-knife. Alas! how such things smote her with memories that made her clasp the poor memento in her hands, weeping and praying over it.

It was while the child lay in his coffin, Terres Graeme came again to Harribee. She looked much older. She had taken one of those steps which in mid-life carry us beyond a boundary we may not recross. No health, no dress, no gayety of manner would ever replace that something of youth, intangible but certain, which had disappeared in the months intervening between her visits.

Her hands were full of flowers, and she went with Faith to scatter them over the white grave.

clothes of the dead boy. With dark, sad eyes she stood gazing at the image of rest before her, until some large tears rolled slowly down her face. She wiped them hastily, and touching the small hands unsoiled by sinful deeds, she turned away, murmuring ;

“No grief reaches the dead ! How happy he must be !”

About a week after the funeral Lord Graeme rode up to the farm door, and asked the servant who came to meet him, if Miss Harribee were at home. He was shown into the house-place, and his eyes delighted themselves with the homelike beauty and spotlessness of the dwelling which sheltered so lovely a soul. In a few minutes she came to him. Never had she appeared so gentle and so womanly. Her black dress and lawn kerchief made the fittest setting for beauty so noble and so soulful.

“Faith ! Faith !” He took her hands, but the two words were all that he could say. And Faith was much troubled. She could not but remember how much had passed since they had met. Her eyes were full of tears. His own were dim because of her sorrow.

“He has gone to the Great Physician,” she said softly, “he’ll be sick nae mair now.”

“I am very sorry for you, Faith.”

“Ay, for me. But there’s joy for Davie. And fayther and mother will be sharing it. Yet he was vera dear to me! Vera, vera dear to me! Oh, Davie! Davie!”

“Faith, you are lonely here. All are gone that ever loved you. Only I remain. Can you not listen to me now?”

“There is nae thocht o’ love in my heart. And it isna kind o’ you to be coming here at a lord. Folks will make ill talk anent it.”

“You have some sheep advertised for sale. I always bought your father’s yearlings. Can I not do some honest trading with you—you who are so well-known?”

“You dinna ken what village kimmers are; they will see wrang where nae wrang is.”

“If they could slander you, they would slander an angel from heaven.”

“Plenty o’ folks would see faults in an angel:—what for no? They said that Christ was a wine-bibber, and that he sorted himself with publicans and sinners. I’m feared for women’s tongues. I am that. And sae Lord Graeme,

if you like me, as you say you do, you'll like my fair name, and gie nane occasion to speak o' me at all."

She had remained standing, and she now offered her hand. There is a certain physiognomy in manners, and he understood that he was kindly but positively dismissed. Yet he did not lose courage. Hope says to us continually "go on, go on," and thus leads us bravely and cheerfully to the grave.

What was Faith to do with her life now? Lord Graeme had said, truly enough, she was alone. No further intelligence had come from Agnes. Renwick's assertion that she was living among play-actors, Faith refused to believe. She could not look at the calm, lovely, love-some face above her hearth, and think of its reality as one of those, whom in her soul she believed to be the "maist senseless and thochtless of a' the children o' Satan."

Phemie also was inclined to think better of Agnes than such associates inferred. She was sure "it was ane o' Lander's lies. He wanted Archie for his ain lass, and he didna spare his tongue to get him. Weel, he didna get much!" she added, scornfully.

"I might ask Lord Graeme if the report were true. He surely knows what his nephew is doing."

"Ay, you might ask, but you would be a born fool if you do. Why go a-seeking ill news? If oor Agnes is wrang, she'll hae to be brought right, and God kens best the means and the way. That is His work. If you think much o' His grace, and little o' your ain wisdom, you'll no meddle wi' His wark."

For a year or two there was danger that Faith would give herself up to simple money-making. Her father had been a very 'close' man, and Faith's nature was strongly bent the same way. It was known that she had bought four meadows adjoining her own, and that she had made Lord Graeme an offer for the very farm Archie Renwick had once rented.

All these things were vinegar and gall to the silly man who had so readily flung away the love and land of such a woman. If he only could have foreseen Davie's early death! If he had only had any inkling of the large sum of ready money there must have been lying in Hawick bank! He found himself perpetually trying to calculate what the London visit must

have cost, and the funeral, and the four meadows. And they could only have been slices of the golden cake ; the offer for Shepherd's Bush presupposed a handsome capital for stocking and working the land.

These thoughts kept Renwick in a constant state of irritation. Every month since his marriage he had slipped lower and lower, and he was now dependent in a great measure on his wife's skill as a dressmaker. The poor woman worked hard for small thanks. When Archie was drunk he openly regretted his folly ; and Archie was very often drunk. He never had a penny, but he had two-pence worth of thirst with it ; and over his whisky he cursed his ill luck.

"Some one," he said, "has aye stood between me and gude fortune—a silly lad, and then a silly lass—dang the baith o' them !"

Faith heard how things were going with him. No one came to Harribee to buy butter or eggs, but they had a story to tell of Renwick. They thought it would please Faith to hear of his down come, and she was sorry that they thought so badly of her. She held her peace on the

subject, even from good, and neither blamed nor pitied him. "Under no circumstances," she said to herself, "will I interfere in his life again, either by word or deed."

But how little do we know of the future ! Five years after Archie's marriage, there was one of those epidemics of fever which fifty years ago frequently devastated Scotch villages. We call them preventable fevers now, but at that day, and much later, they were undoubtedly laid to the charge of a merciful God. Mosskirtle suffered in nearly all its households. In this season of trouble and poverty, Faith was the mainstay of the village. Her scrupulously clean house upon its breezy height escaped, as it had always done ; and when the fever had run its course there were five orphan boys and girls at Harribee Home. They had been ill, too, and Faith had brought them there for pure air, and good food.

Then there was a fresh outbreak in a valley settlement a mile from the village, and Archie Renwick and his wife were among the stricken. The news came to Faith in that casual way which, in spite of its commonplace atmosphere, is often striking and dramatic. Her head shep-

herd came into the outer kitchen where she was directing the churning, and said :

“Annie and Archie Renwick hae the fever. They are baith oot o’ their senses ; and there is neither bite nor sup in their house.” Then he lifted the wooden pail for which he had come, and went out without another word.

Neither did Faith make any remark. Yet every word had fallen with a strange distinctness upon her ear and heart. As she stood still and silent among the churning-women, she was considering what she ought to do—for in this world, even the best of motives need consideration, and the best of actions need some charity.

“ ‘ Out of their senses, and not a bite or sup in the house ! ’ Surely I didna get that message for naething—whatever folk say, I must do the thing I ought to do.”

For her duty was clear to her, though it was a very painful one. She called Phemie and told her what she had heard, and what she intended to do ; and the old woman answered, “you will tak’ your own way, Faith. You will get trouble and ware gude siller. and at the end,

you will find that doing a kindness to ill folk is like throwing water in the sea."

"Ay weel, Phemie, we must keep mind o' Christ; he did good to the evil and the unthankfu'."

"Even sae. But he was Christ; and you are just Faith Harribee. I'm never against you helping the Lord's ain, and the little children that ken neither right nor wrang, but if I was a vera saint—which the Searcher o' Hearts kens I'm far from thinking mysel—I wouldna lift a feather weight o' His displeasure from Archie Renwick. It's gude and right for the sinner to feel the hand o' the smiter; and I hae seen folk get a part o' the trouble they were o'er keen to ward aff from whar it was sent. Sae, you needna be asking me to do this or that for Renwick. I'm no caring to bear any share o' his punishment."

"I think it is my duty to help the Renwicks, Phemie, and I shall do so."

"To be sure you will. I kent that at the first sough o' your duty. Folks mistak' their will for their duty, whiles."

Then Phemie went off to the churning, and Faith went for the doctor, and the old woman

who had helped her in previous cases; and she took with her in her tax-cart, whatever she thought was needful. But she did not remain herself. She reflected that when Archie and Annie became conscious, it would doubtless be very painful for them to see her.

One morning, however, when they were nearly well, she went purposely to visit them; and purposely also, she avoided any display of the prosperity that had so steadily followed her. In the plain winsey dress and plaid which she wore when on the fells among the sheep, she entered Archie's small cottage. It was a poor, a pitifully poor place, nearly destitute of furniture, quite destitute of every comfort.

Archie sat cowering over a few smouldering peats. Annie's arms were across the bare table, and her pale, wasted face was buried in them. "Faith!" said Archie, coloring painfully and stumbling to his feet—"Faith! Faith!—Miss Harribee."

"Gude morning, Annie. Gude morning, Archie. I am come to see you as a sister might come. I hae heard how ill you hae been, and what trouble of a' kinds you hae come through, and I want to help you—if you'll let

me"—and then she drew a chair to Annie's side, and laid her hand upon the poor woman's knee.

Archie kept his eyes fixed upon the smoking peats, Annie cried softly and clasped Faith's hand. "You hae worn out your chance here, Archie, but there are braw lands beyond the sea, and braw chances in them for a lad like you. You will do fine yet. I know you will. Sae, I hae brought wi' me two hundred pounds. If you will tak' the loan o' it, and just begin life o'er again in a new world, you will make me a very happy woman. Look up, Renwick! You used to hae a brave heart. Will you tak' your bonnie wife and go to America? You'll win back a' you hae lost, and mair beside."

"Oh, Archie, say you'll gae! Archie, we'll be happy and weel-to-do yet!" and the poor woman went to his side, and whispered entreaties into his ear.

"It's a sair downcome to me, Faith. I ne'er thocht to tak' your charity, lass."

"Dinna pain me by talking sae foolish-like, Archie. It is only a loan I am offering you. When you can weel spare it, I'll no refuse to

tak' it back again. Annie, tak' the silver, my dear lass! I'll leave it wi' you."

"Na, na; I'll tak' it from your ain hand, Faith. It is luck, silver from your hand. And wi' God's help it will mak' a new man o' me."

"Thank you, Archie."

She offered him her hand, and with a shamed-faced reluctance he took it. Then some conversation followed, in which it was decided that Archie should start at once for Liverpool and make all necessary investigations.

"For the sea voyage will do you baith a world o' gude after the fever," said Faith," and while you are awa, Archie, I'll take Annie to Harribee wi' me.

In about a week, there was a very sanguine letter from Archie. He had fallen in with some men from Ohio. He had listened with wonder to their descriptions of western life. He was certain that he had found the very place suitable for the new opportunity he was to have.

And Faith—though her heart was pained by the selfish complacency of the letter—encouraged and strengthened Annie at every point for the strange experiences she was likely to

meet with. Above all, she filled two boxes from her own abundant stores of linen and winsey; and sent her away to her new life, full-handed, happy, and hopeful."

CHAPTER X.

THE HOUR WILL COME.

“ The only way in this world to get peace is to make it out of pain.”

“ The trifles of our daily lives,
The common things scarce worth recall,
Whereof no visible trace survives,
These are the mainsprings after all.”

THOSE who have ever spent a day in the Border uplands, when there has been “ clear shining after rain,” can never forget the ineffable sense of freshness and purity, of some rarer and diviner atmosphere, of some nearer intelligence with nature that was its special attribute. Faith Harribee had been familiar with the condition all her conscious life, yet every such day was a fresh revelation to her. She had never heard the jargon of the present generation about nature and fine scenery; Wordsworth was not even a name to her, but she had David’s glowing words in her heart, and she needed no better interpreter.

She had felt “ the wings of the morning ” in

the fresh winnowing winds. She had seen old earth laugh with the incalculable laughter of a spring-day, until she understood how Israel's singer said, "the hills clapped their hands with joy." She knew too, how he had felt when he sang of the marching cattle and sheep upon a thousand hills; and she was recalling this very passage one exquisite morning in June, as she stood upon The Preacher's Stone, and looked down and away, over the billowy hills where the great flocks of ewes and lambs were feeding.

There was a fresh, merry wind, and she watched it blowing little white hollows in the dun fleeces of the sheep. It fluttered her own dress, and got into the nooks of her plaid, and blew backward her gipsy bonnet; and she stood there, as glad in it, as if she were some young tree feeling the joyful presence in all its branches.

It was seldom she climbed as high as the Preacher's Stone. There, she was in one of earth's sweet unplanted places, and knee-deep in brackens she stood. It was mainly her own land she overlooked. The flocks and cattle upon it were her own. The ripening grain was hers, and the long meadow grass. In the

hollow, far down, she could see the gray walls of Harribee, standing amid a blowing drift of white fruit blossoms. Oh how beautiful! how happy! how wealthy! was the whole fair picture. "The earth is full o' the goodness o' the Lord," She said the words with all her soul, and the wind carried them joyfully with it, through space.

She was about to descend, when she heard a rustling behind her, and with a rush and a bound two fine dogs came dashing through the long brackens. She spoke to them, and they ran to her side, suffering her caresses, but looking restlessly behind them, until in a few moments *Terres Graeme* appeared. Then with quick barks of joy they ran backward to meet her.

She was looking extremely handsome in a short dark dress of fine merino, and a black satin scarf across her shoulders. The wind had given her cheeks a color which it was a joy to see, and the walk a brilliancy to her eyes which made them singularly attractive.

"Why, *Faith Harribee*!" she cried, "what a pleasure to meet you up here! I thought I had the world to myself up at this height."

"I was beguiled wi' the fine air: climbing is

easy this morning, and whiles I like to come up here. I can see things no to be seen in any other place, I think."

"You see your own share of earth all together—house and land, and flocks."

"That is a vera pleasant sight, but I hope I see mair than that. From where we are now, I can look back twa hundred years, and see Richard Cameron standing here, and a' around him, the hill-sides thick wi' men and women listening to the word they had ne'er heard before."

"Oh but there were plenty of chapels all through the dales."

"Papist chapels? Yes, and the service o' them in Latin, and the priest as fond o' 'riding' as any riever in their congregation, and the hale thing just a farce o' religion. Hundreds stood around, and below this stone that kent nae mair anent Calvary and the great sacrifice, than they kent anent the Druids and their rings o' standing stones. I like to think o' that great preacher telling the wonderfu' news to the rough men booted and spurred wha stood near by him. He must hae told the story weel to make them give up the things

that were not only their hale living, but their greatest pleasure. My fayther had a picture o' him; a big man in a black gown wi' a face that folks be to mind. He preached righteousness to them and they lifted nae mair cattle, and went nae mair raiding over the border. He gied them the bible in a life-like tongue, and the swords that had been sharp against decent farming men, holding their ain, he turned against the enemies o' the Lord, and the Solemn League and Covenant."

"He must have been a great man."

"Ay, and he slept in caves, and preached on the bleak hill-sides to the brave border folks; sae then, he was a true brother o' Him wha had not whar to lay his head."

They stood for a few moments in silence, then Terres said, "I see some children among the sheep."

"Ay, they are Ral and Tim Gibson, and Janet Maxwell. Their faythers and mothers died in the fever; and they too came vera near dying. But they are braw and strong now, and doing weel."

"You took two other girls also?"

"The widow Lariston's girls, Puir things!

They had a sair tussle back to life again ; but they are like to get the upper hand o' their sickness now."

"Have you adopted them, Faith? My brother heard so, and he thought it was so noble-hearted of you."

"Adopted them ! Na, na. What for would I adopt them? The Harribees arena noble, like the Graemes, but they hae a gude back count, and they hae been aye their own landlords ; weel-born, and weel-to-do, under bidding to no man. These lads and lasses are cotter's bairns. I couldna mak' gentle folks o' them, even if I wanted to do sae foolish a thing, and I'll no spoil gude working men and women. There is plenty in Harribee to gie them shelter and food, and clothes suitable, and I sall see that the lads are made gude farmers or shepherds, and the lasses gude housewives and spinners. Forbye they sall a' learn how to read their bible, and write a letter, and cast their ain bit 'counts. That is the hale o' my plan for them. What for would I be adopting bairns of whose forbears I ken naething? The Harribees are fine old stock ; I'm no the woman to risk poorer grafts on it."

“You are wise, and kind, both ; besides—if you will allow me to name the subject—you have a sister and she may have children. I feel some interest in her rights, seeing that she married into my family.”

“You hae touched a subject that is never far awa’ from my ain thochts. I would to God I knew whar my bonnie Agnes is ! If I had any hope of finding her in London, I would go and seek her, and bring her to her ain home again.”

“If she would come. You must take that into your thoughts also, Faith. For my own part, I do not think she would.”

Faith looked anxiously into Miss Graeme’s face. “What do you ken anent her ?” she asked. “You be to speak plainly now.”

They had begun to walk slowly down the fell, and Terres took advantage of the rough road to delay her answer. But when she spoke, it was with a decision that left no doubt behind it.

“I know nothing whatever of Agnes Graeme. I will tell you all I know of Roland Graeme. He is the natural son of my eldest brother, William. William was engaged to marry Lady

Ann Lenox. He was to marry her at Christmas; he went abroad in the summer, and he never came home again. Shortly before Christmas he wrote to me, declaring he could not keep his troth to Lady Ann, and asking me to give her a letter which he inclosed.

“But he must hae had a gude reason?”

“He had become infatuated with an Italian singer and actress. He refused to give her up; yet he was well aware that the brothers Lenox would hold him to account for their sister’s wrong. So he vanished from life as far as we are concerned, with the woman he had chosen. For ten years we heard nothing of him, excepting an assurance from his lawyer at intervals that he was well and contented. Then one day, Tilbert got a letter. It was dated from an obscure Greek town. William said he was ill, and he urged his brother not to lose a moment in coming to him. But though he hasted’ night and day, he was too late. William was dead. Roland’s mother had been dead a year, and the house and effects were in charge of a very honest old priest. He had taken good care of Roland also, and he gave up with him all the papers and personal prop-

erty of his father. Many people would have left the boy where he was."

"Oh, that would have been cruel!"

"Lord Graeme thought so. He brought him on to Castle Graeme. He invested every shilling that his father's personal effects realized, for him. He gave him a good education, and if Roland had taken his advice and gone into the army, it would always have been possible for us to have given him a certain degree of countenance and help. For he is a Graeme, though on the sinister side of the escutcheon; and I was rather fond of the lad. He had no need to run away with Agnes Harribee. We thought the marriage a very suitable one for him."

"But my fayther was dead set against it. I never in a' my life saw fayther sae dour and set anent any thing. Agnes kent he would never forgive her, living or dying, and she ne'er sought his favor—puir lass! puir bonnie lass!"

"We have only heard of Roland once since he left us, and that in a casual and unexpected way. My brother went one night to a fine theater in London, and he was singing and acting. He said Roland certainly did both in a most

wonderful way, and the court and the city were all wild about him. After the performance was over, Tilbert waited to speak to him. He would not see his uncle's offered hand, and when he called him Graeme, he answered, ' You mistake me, sir, I have abandoned the name, and forgotten all that it binds me to.' He had indeed taken, in public at least, his mother's name, an Italian one, which I have forgotten. That is all I know about Roland, Agnes was not spoken of at all. But she has doubtless lived in that peculiar circle all these years. It is one of constant change and excitement. She can not now have one feeling in sympathy with her old life. I think you would be hurt and disappointed if you should see her."

I am vera certain that I should not. You must na say one word o' suspicion anent Agnes. I care na where she has been living, nor among what kind o' people, Agnes is of the seed of the righteous, born in the household of faith, an inheritor of all the promises He makes, even unto the fourth generation of those that love and serve Him. If she has wandered to the ends o' the earth she will come back hame as surely as the wandering son in the parable came

hame. And mind this, he was always the son; in the far country, in rioting and in hunger, never less than the son. I'm no feared for Agnes. She is always God's daughter. If a' around her were doing wrang, Agnes would do right; she couldna help it, she wouldna want to help it. David, and mair gude folks than David, hae had whiles to dwell among sons o' Belial, but I would not believe ane o' the seed o' Adam—man or woman—who said Agnes had done aught against her fayther's God, or her ain womanhood."

"Oh, Faith, what a grand thing it must be to have love like yours! If your face would flush, and your eyes shine for me, as they do this moment for Agnes, I would count myself a happy woman. No wonder Tilbert is willing to spend his life trying to win you."

"Come into Harribee and take a glint at Agnes. I hae her picture. You canna look at it and hae one ill thocht o' her." She quite ignored the remark about Lord Graeme, and Terres did not think it prudent to continue the subject.

After their breezy walk they were both a little weary, and when Faith said, "take off

your bonnet, Miss Graeme, and I'll hae a cup o' tea made, and there's new cakes and fresh butter, and as much thick cream as it likes you to drink," Terres answered, "That is just what I desire. I am hungry, and I long for the tea. And oh how pleasant is this sunny room!"

Then Faith doffed her plaid and bonnet, and set the tray with her best china, and brought out all her dainties. And the two women enjoyed the good things and talked over again the probabilities of Roland's career and the life of Agnes.

When the entertainment was over, Terres sat still. She had something to say to Faith, and she had not yet found her opportunity. While she was considering how to introduce the subject one of the orphan children came to Faith for some directions. When she had left the room Miss Graeme said, "that fever in Mosskirtle cost you something, Faith."

"I shall get back mair than the cost some way or other. The bairns are industrious and biddable."

"I was thinking of something else—something I heard. May I ask you if it is true?"

"Surely."

“Did you really give Archie Renwick two hundred pounds? Did you really take care of him and Annie while they had the fever?”

“I sent Gammer Jariston to take care of them. I never said to mortal kind that I had given them two hundred pounds.”

“But Renwick went up and down the country side bragging of how much you yet thought of him; yes, and the night before he left with his wife for Liverpool, he met my brother and he flung the same boast in his face, and Tilbert, only that the boor was so white and weak, would have horsewhipped him for it.”

“I was mista'en in Archie Renwick. I am vera sorry he had sae little care for my name, and for what bad-hearted folks would say. I am sorry, sorry to hear tell o' this. Puir weak lad! He was aye fain to be boasting o' something or ither.”

“Faith, did you love him?”

“Ay—wi' a' my heart.”

“How is it then that you do not regret him? That you are so happy?”

“Because, I kent that naething could happen me but what God ordered. If it had been His will that I should hae married Renwick,

naething, nor any body on earth, could hae hindered me doing sae. If it wasna His will, I didna want my ain will—and sorrow wi' it."

"But you must have suffered?"

"Ay, I suffered. But I had nae time to think o' my suffering. If I did my duty every day I was that tired at night I hadna the power to keep awake and fret myself. And by and by the weary ache all went, and I was comforted though I scarcely knew how."

"I had a lover once, Faith. It is twenty years ago. My brother made me give him up because he was poor. Do you remember the night Lord Graeme saved you from the quaking moss? That very night I met him in Kirtle Wood and spoke to him, and he passed me without a word. I have been tormented ever since with love and chagrin, and a great longing to see him, and yet a terror of meeting one so indifferent. He is rich now, and of course thinks that because I am still unmarried, I wish to renew the old tie. Alas! he does not know that I have remained unmarried for his sake."

"You should hae put that trouble behind you lang syne. Troubles are like medicines, they

arena intended to live upon. Puir living they make!"

"How can I put it behind me?"

"Just tell your ain soul that if it isna God's will for you to marry the man, you dinna want him. And get some work for your hands. And go out in the sunshine. And try and find a bit of loving-kindness to do to some other unhappy woman."

"What work can I do? I have tried to sew flowers on canvass with colored wools. The result was dreadful. I have tried painting, and I never could make a picture that looked like either sea or strand, river, mountain or meadow. I had to give up music. It was too full of memories. I tried beautifying the grim, melancholy, old castle; even fresh flowers looked sad in it. I might, perhaps, write a romance—"

"Na, na, ma'am; you be to try and find honest work than that! Romances are maistly lies, I'm doubting. Get a spinning-wheel, a big wheel or a little one, and spin your ain flax. There isna a mair comfortable kind o' wark in life. It is sae calmsome, and your thochts gae sae cheerily to the humming,"

"But I cannot spin, Faith."

“Then, I’ll show you how to spin, and nae better time for aught good than present time.”

So she lifted out the wheel and showed Terres its few mysteries, and the two women grew merry over their efforts. Then there was a sharp rap at the door, as if it had been struck with a whip handle. They were facing the entrance, and Faith said, with the air of a mistress speaking to a servant, “Come in.”

“Good morning, shepherdess! What about the lambs? Will you take my offer?”

“I might hae a better one, and I might not. If you will add five pounds to it I will take it.”

“Very well. I will send for them—this afternoon—that is, next week.”

It was with difficulty he controlled his thoughts. His eyes were fixed upon the wheel and the woman standing beside it. She had ceased all attempts to continue her spinning, and stood with eyes dropped upon the bobbin in her hand. Her face, which had been full of light and pleasure, was white and set. She was evidently restraining herself by the most painful efforts.

Faith saw the embarrassment of both parties and hastened to close the interview. “When-

ever it is your will, Lord Seaton," she said. "The siller is at your ain convenience, likewise. Gude day, lord."

As the door closed she turned to Terres. She had taken the nearest chair, and there was almost a resentful look upon her face. "I must go now," she said with a sudden coldness.

"I am vexed if Lord Seaton's coming has grieved you. I didna dream of him. I thoct it was the head shepherd from the hills at the noon hour."

"The noon hour ! So it is, and long past it. Why Faith, how the morning has gone ! My bonnet and scarf—thanks !—and call the dogs if you please. When shall I have such happy, innocent hours again ? "

"You hae the making o' all your hours, Ma'am."

"To be sure. Good-by ! Come Sweet-lips. Come Juno !" and with a smile that Faith felt to be forced, she walked away at a rapid pace.

"It is a' of two miles, and maybe I ought to hae proffered the tax-cart, or hae sent a man riding swift for her carriage—na, na ; she came o' her ain free will, and I am not bound to let her pleasure break my work. Forbye, the walk

will do her gude, and if she likes, she can cut through Kirtle Wood and shorten it half a mile."

That was precisely what Terres did. Her quick walk helped her somewhat, yet she knew that only in the freedom of her own room could she fully relieve the tension of feelings so surprised and overwrought. In the middle of the wood, in the centre of the narrow path, just where she had met him before, Lord Seaton stood. He had dismounted, and was leaning against his horse. Terres must turn back, or she must pass him.

The first alternative scarcely suggested itself; if it did, it was indignantly denied in the very moment of its inception. She walked straight on, scarcely conscious of her effort, seeming to skim the ground in the forced excitement of the moment. Ere she was aware, she had reached the barrier in her path.

"Terres! Terres! Dear Terres, speak to me!"

What could she do? She glanced upward, and then covering her face with her hands, sobbed with as womanly a passion as if she had been the simplest village maiden.

And what did Seaton want more. He broke her low sobs with sweet words long forgotten. He kissed away the tears that wet her clasped fingers. He woo'd her again with all the fervor and tenderness of his, and of her own youth.

What explanations! What renewed vows of love followed! Up and down the sweet green path they paced for hours, until every thing had been made clear, and every thing forgiven. Oh, it was so easy to do! So pleasant to do! For truest love on both sides was the intercessor and the interpreter.

And when Terres at length shut and locked behind her the door of her own apartments she was too happy to be still. Joy or sorrow in most women runs into motion, and she continued her restless walk up and down, murmuring to herself: "Who could have thought it? Who could have hoped it? Oh, Faith Harribee, how I must love you! To-day you have been my good angel. Now I must go and tell Tilbert. Ah! I need to write no romance now; the sweetest one of all is that which we write in our own heart."

CHAPTER XI.

A L A T E W E D D I N G .

“ O Love and Hope the same !

Lean close to me, for now the sinking sun
That warmed our feet scarce gilds our hair above.
Lo, the last clusters ! Pluck them every one,
And let us sup with summer ; ere the gleam
Of autumn set the year's pent sorrow free.”

“ At last, though it be late, Love clasps the hand of Fate.”

THAT night Terres Graeme dressed herself with taste and splendor. Her happiness had given her back something of the royal beauty of her youth ; and it was no mockery to adorn her fine arms and throat with gems. Lord Graeme looked at her with admiration and amazement. “ Do you expect company, or are you going out this evening, Terres ? ” he asked, and he went to meet her, and gave her his arm, and with appreciative smiles, placed her in the chair next his own.

“ I am so happy, Tilbert ! So happy, that I could not help dressing gayly. I have spoken with Lord Seaton, All is forgiven. I have

won my lover and my youth back. We are to be married in three months."

Graeme's face grew dark and disapproving. "I shall have something to say about that," he growled. "I am not going to give you up, Terres. Why, you are all I have! We have been all our lives together! Give Seaton your money, if you like, but not yourself. Not yourself, Terres!"

"Tilbert, there must be no interference now with me, or with my happiness. I intend to marry Seaton—be sure of that!"

"The man is fortune-hunting now, as he was twenty years ago."

"You might speak the truth. If a border lord has every other sin, he keeps to the truth, if he is a gentleman."

"I am speaking the truth. Seaton got nothing but the title, and a trunk full of mortgages. Seaton Court is under bond to the last acre. Your £50,000 will be salvation to him."

"I am glad of it."

"Terres, my dear Terres, do not leave me! What is this stranger to us?"

"Seaton is your neighbor. I shall see you every day. Tilbert, let me be happy."

“I thought you loved your brother?”

“‘You thought!’ Oh Tilbert, have I not proved my love? Who can be to me just what you have been?”

“Tush! Let us go to dinner. It is waiting. There is something real in dinner—love is all words.”

But he ate nothing. The butler filled and refilled his wine glass; and his face grew darker and darker as he drank. He was really suffering. Terres was the dearest part of his life; he was wounded by her desertion, crippled in his affections; he felt as if he had suffered an irreparable injury. He could not speak calmly of the change, and he maintained a moody silence.

“They be the strangest pair as ever drew breath o’ life,” said the butler to his companions in the servant’s hall. “Here comes Miss, all tricked oot in satin and jewels, as if she was going to dine wi’ the queen, and nae less; and here’s my lord, a-sulking and a-glooming, and a-leaving gude victuals; and the baith o’ them, in the maist-touch-me-not o’ tempers.”

“Tuts! Dawson. They fight, and they mak’ it up as easy as most folks. I dinna think

much o' Miss Graeme's bad tempers. They are like a whiff-whaff o' storm, here and awa' again. When women hae to live wi' a man like my lord, they be to hae some temper, or they'd be trod under foot. Even sae!—what were they doing, Janet, when you went in to sort the fire and the hearthstane?"

"My lord was walking about wi' a face as black as Sawtan's; and Miss Graeme was lying back in her big chair, wi' her e'en shut."

"Letting on to be asleep! Noo, there is simply nae thing mair aggravating to a man troubled in his mind," said Dawson, "and I dinna doot my lord will gie her a wee shake, if she doesna heed his mood, ere lang."

"A body may surely hae e'en, and see not; and ears, and hear not, when there is tempers and port wine aboon a man's gude sense and gude feeling. You said yoursel', he drank a hale bottle o' port,—nice company any man is, after a bottle o' port."

"My lord tak's a bottle vera easy. You wouldna ken it on him."

"Ay, but you can ken it in him. My sister Jean's man, can tak' a bottle o' whiskey, and walk as steady as mysel'—but he has drunk a

hale deevil doon wi' it, and Jean just ties him up, as she wad tie up a wild animal till he comes to himsel' again."

"I'd like to see your sister Jean, or any ither woman body, lay a hand—or a word—on my lord."

"He's nae mair than any ither man—he's feared for his sister"—

"Him feared! Na, na! He doesna ken the meaning o' the word."

"Tuts, Dawson! You dinna ken when a man is feared. He is walking aboot thee now, just as meeserable as a fesh oot a water; and Miss Terres is tormenting him 'oot o' his senses, wi' her shut e'en and her way o' looking as if naething on earth could ever mak' her heed him any mair. He'll hae to go to her, and say the first gude word, and may be she'll listen to him, and may be she'll say 'she doesna care to be worried, or she's sleepy, or the like o' that.'"

But when Graeme fulfilled his housekeeper's prophecy, and stooped over his sister and said the first gude word, she opened her eyes with a bright smile, and answered, "I am so glad you are more reasonable, Tilbert. Let us look at my marriage as an accomplished

fact, and consider your happiness with regard to it."

"My happiness is out of such consideration."

"Nonsense! I was thinking of you and Faith. I spent all the morning with her. A man had better win Faith Harribee than conquer a kingdom. She is the truest, sweetest, most lovable woman in the whole world. I am not worthy to be her sister."

Nothing Terres could have said would so completely and so instantaneously have driven away the evil spirit in Graeme's heart. He asked all about their interview; but as Terres related their conversation about Roland and Agnes, the light on his face died out, and he shivered slightly as he bent lower to the blaze. But Terres was so happy, and her heart was so full of new hope, that she threw backward, as it were, the thought that blanched her brother's face, and made him shiver under the lash of memory. Still the things of the present are always the most engrossing, and the words of Terres about Faith, were sweeter than honey, and stronger than wine to him.

"And you really think that I may hope, Terres?"

"I do think so. When I said you were willing to spend your whole life in winning her love, she never answered the remark. There is a great deal of consent in a woman's silence. And Faith is one of those women who are mistress of their own secrets; if she had not liked you, she would have said at once, 'it is a pity he should waste life in a useless effort. I never could love him.' Yes, she would surely have said some words to that effect, for she is as clear and truthful as the dayshine."

"I would be a happy, and a good man, Terres, if I had Faith for a wife."

"I am sure you would. A little caution, and a little perseverance, and you will win her."

Then they were silent a while, but both were thinking of the same thing. Terres had not spoken of Roland that night without a distinct purpose. The subject was always a disagreeable one to enter upon, but at this crisis in her life, she wished her brother to understand that she had fully committed herself to a certain position, and that she meant to abide by it.

Graeme was not slow in comprehending his

sister. He recalled all she had told him, and then, in a thoughtful, hesitating manner, remarked:

“The version you gave Faith is to be the true one?”

“It is the final one. It is the one I shall reassert whenever the subject forces itself to discussion.”

“Sometimes, I am sorry—”

“I am never sorry. I never shall be sorry. Look if the door is shut and the corridor empty.”

He rose, glanced up and down the gloomy passage, shut the door carefully, and returned to the hearth. Terres had drawn her chair closer to the fire, they bent together over it, and their low words blended with the crackling wood, and seemed to vanish amid the smoke and blaze of the cavernous chimney.

“Let us face the position squarely for this once, Tilbert. Then we will bury the subject forever. There is no possibility of Roland ever hearing the truth from any soul but you, or I?”

“I am sure of that.”

“ You said, sometimes you were sorry—what for? ”

“ Well, he is a fine fellow. He would have done very well in my place.”

“ He is a fine fellow on the operatic stage, where his own place is ; or he would never have gone there. What Graeme worthy of the name, ever before took to fiddling and acting and making a show of himself, for money? William committed an outrage against every one of his family, living and dead, in marrying a woman whom any Italian beggar for a piastre could go and jeer at, or applaud, as it suited his fancy—a foreigner, almost a pauper, and a papist too. I don't pretend to much religion, but the Graeme's have always stood by episcopacy—an adventurer, I have no doubt, who traded upon Will's folly.”

“ Come, let us keep to facts. Neither of us ever saw her. She was well spoken of in the Greek town where Will made his home.”

“ We will keep to facts, if you wish it. She left a son, who, if she were married to Will, ought to be in your place.”

“ She was married to Will. There is no doubt of that. Will's last letter, which the

priest gave me, said so; and referred me to the records of the little Roman chapel where the ceremony took place. I did not go to search them, but I have not the slightest doubt of Roland's legitimacy."

"Look at the fact then in its worst light. If the marriage should be discovered, still there is not the slightest proof that you knew of it. You would have to give place to the interloper, but popular sympathy would be with you, and in the meantime every year is a distinct gain to you. You have become a rich man. Never more could you know the pinching and scrimping of those days, when Will was in possession, and not only neglecting the property, but wasting every shilling he could get upon strangers in a strange country."

"Many people would say I ought to have been sure of my position; others, that it was most unlikely Will died without leaving me evidence to establish his son's rights. Then the question would rise naturally, "What did he do with such evidence?"

"Whatever you did with it, you did well. I stand with you there. Your right, as our father's son was before Roland's right as the

son of that woman ! Your right was the natural right, the strong right. For what is done, I will not have a regret. Let us think of the future. If you marry Faith, and have sons of your own, you will be glad you kept the inheritance for them. If you have no heir, and I have children, I shall be equally grateful. If neither of us have children, let the name and the estate go to Graeme of Hazelburn ; he is of pure border lineage on both sides."

"Terres, I have often had another thought about this matter—if we should meet Will again, what of that meeting?"

"Are you trembling at shadows? I never was afraid of Will when he was here, and lately, I have lost all fear of him—yonder. I shall ask him what right he had to make us ill friends with old friends like the Lenox? What right he had to defile the old line that gave him birth, and wealth, and honor? What right he had to marry a woman whom he was compelled to go into hiding with?—A woman who forced him to desert his home, and his brother and sister—to neglect his private duties, and his public obligations, and caused him to die like a criminal in a Greek hamlet ; instead of among the

shadowy host and the living kin, in ~~the~~ Græme's Castle? If Will is there, other Graemes will be there also ; men of our own spirit, women who will understand my feelings—they will stand by what we have done, and approve it. If we are to begin supposing about the future, we have as much right to suppose one thing as another.

“That is true. But I have often wondered why Roland dislikes me so much? Does he suspect any thing?”

“Very likely he does. A bright boy of nearly ten years old has his opinions and convictions. Roland remembered his Greek life very vividly. His mother was a saint in his memory, his father the kindest and best of men. After he grew to manhood and married, he would be sure to judge his memories by his own experiences, and almost certainly arrive at the truth. That he treated you with such marked dislike and contempt, shows in reality he had done so ; but it also shows that he had no proofs of his suspicions, no facts of any kind which could turn them into surety. If he had, we should long ago have been made aware of them.”

"Still, Terres, ——"

"Tilbert, if you have fits of remorse about that playing-woman's son, do keep them to yourself. I am not disposed to let them trouble my future. To the last moment of my life I will stand by the position we took. I shall expect you to do the same, if you are not a poltroon and a coward."

"Keep such words within your lips, Terres. I won't have them thrown sideways at me."

"Don't provoke the thoughts that bring the words, then. And what use is there in our quarreling now? Do save some of your temper for Faith Harribee."

"Faith would not provoke me as you do."

"Indeed, I can assure you that very good people can be exceedingly exasperating. I imagine even I and you could learn something in the way of aggravation from a quarrel between saints. You will not be able to bully Faith any more than myself. Her weapons of offense and defense may be different from mine, but they will be effective. I have no doubt of it."

Her real anger had passed into a tone of banter, and Graeme was inclined to accept the

compromise and suffer all ill-feeling to evaporate in a laugh. Besides, he wished to talk of Faith, and when Terres said, she was determined to have her for a bridesmaid, Graeme was so delighted with the possibilities the situation offered, that he was quite willing to discuss with interest further arrangements for the ceremony.

Nor was the proposal for Faith's presence any very great social trespass. She had been gradually becoming a woman of wealth and influence. The dominie always called her "the Lady of Harribee." The neighboring gentry had begun to accept and repeat the title. In all local matters she held a controlling power. Her interest was well worth seeking, and though she usually avoided ceremonious visiting, it was known that she had been a guest at Elderslee, the residence of the new member of Parliament, whose election she had undoubtedly secured. So, though she preserved her single life, and persevered in all her industrious and economical habits, evidences of wealth and refinement and social power had gradually found a place in the gray old home of Harribee.

After Terres left her that eventful morning

she was unhappy. She did not understand the sudden change in Miss Graeme's manner, and a moody, fretful temper was one of the things which she could neither tolerate nor excuse. "Any way, I'll no let her worry my goings on," she mused; "I hae often heard tell these fine ladies hae what they call the vapors, and the nerves. Certie! They might be catching, for I'm no like myself at a', feeling cross for naething, and a' tossed up because 'my lady' got weary o' playing at being amiable. Tuts, tuts, Faith Harribee! You arena very amiable yourself, blaming folks out o' your ain mind. Phemie, let us hae a bit o' solid dinner, and then get me a web o' winsey. I'll cut some clothing for poor Mausie Coquet to make, and then ride o'er to Moss Kirtle with it."

Phemie was not pleased at the interruption to the usual work which Miss Graeme's visit had caused—"fine lady visitors taking tea before dinner time, and makin' believe to spin! Perfect nonsense!" and with such thoughts in her heart, she did not do any thing tending to bring a pleasanter atmosphere into the house. So Faith was glad to get into the open air again, and she drove slowly and talked longer than

usual with her needle-woman, and even delayed at intervals to speak a few words with some of the village wives.

It was nearly dusk when she got home. She had been thinking of Agnes all the afternoon. Miss Graeme's conversation had brought some very solemn considerations for her. If she had any heirs, the children of Agnes—if Agnes had any children—were the natural ones. Failing them, what was she to do with her money?

“I might marry and hae bairns myself.” The thought came to her she knew not how, but it brought the blood surging into her face, and she felt annoyed and hurried the pony into a gallop—“a daft-like thing to do,” she muttered, “the puir beastie wasna to blame for the silly thocht.”

When she went into the house-place Phemie gave her a letter. “It cam’ twa hours ago, but you’re aye rinning roun’ the country-side thae days—and I’m maist sure it is frae Agnes. I hae been fair sick anent it, fearing it was ill news.”

“Ay, it’s from Agnes, thank God! Dinna greet, Phemie, I’ll read it this vera minute.”

It was a loving, child-like letter. "She was so happy," she said, "only not feeling very well, and just dowie with a fit of home-sickness." God had given her two sons, and she had called them after her father and grandfather, Matthew and David; "and oh, Faith!" she concluded, "I want to kiss you, and to see you kiss my bairns, and though I ken weel you have forgiven me lang syne, I want you to say so once again, dear lassie; for I am not quite well, and my heart is sair longing for a word from you. And put a bonnie blue-bell from the fell-side in your letter, and with a kiss and a kind word, send to the care of John Clapham, Lincoln's Inn, London."

And Faith and Phemie kissed the letter, and then knelt down and thanked God. From each woman's heart had gone the last shadow of every thing not lovely and loving. Faith laid Phemie's wrinkled face, set in its wide, linen-bordered cap, against her breast, kissed away the tears in her faded blue eyes, and whispered to her, "Forgie me, Phemie, if I was a bit thochtless to you! And, Phemie, kiss me for Agnes, too. The dear bairn, she is maybe coming hame to us yet."

For Faith suddenly built a great deal upon this unlooked for communication. Agnes had hitherto refrained from giving the slightest clew to her residence. She had left her without any chance even to thank her for the box which contained so many evidences of her affection. But now she had risked every thing in her desire to hear from home, and Faith, that very night, sat down and told her all that happened since she left Harribee. She was a slow pen-woman, but oh how easy it seemed to write to Agnes the fullest words of tender love and complete forgiveness.

And the two lads! How her heart went out to them! She had been troubling herself about an heir to her property, and here were her own nephews! "The bairns o' my ain bonnie Agnes! Called for my honored fayther and grandfayther, and holding a memory likewise o' my dear wee Davie! The lands and the hame o' Harribees will come to their ain, thank God! Oh, if a body could only trust God to look both before and behind them! What a mair than useless worry I hae had this day! I hae twa nephews! Think o' that! Oh

may The Three and The One be their God and guide ! ” *

There was not a sprig of heather on the hills that was not dearer to her after this news. And yet “a full heart is aye a kind heart.” The orphans within her gates were never an hour less welcome. No one was permitted to darken their youth with cross words or unjust reproofs. And it may be said here as well as later, that the course she had marked out for herself with regard to them, though not a very ambitious one, succeeded far better than many much more ambitious plans have done. And it gathered weight from her own experience ; for during many a year, Faith’s protégés received constant additions, some temporary, and others whose future she became entirely responsible for. So that the Dominie frequently said of her, “She is a woman who has had no children, but there have been few women whom so many children have loved.”

The morning after this happy letter from Agnes, Faith was astonished by another visit from Miss Graeme. She was even more astonished at the physical change in the woman’s

* An old Border blessing.

face. "You hae grown years younger in a single night, Miss Graeme; whate'er has come to you?"

"Love has come to me; joy has come to me, and a friend, and a husband! Every thing has come to me, Faith! And I think you were the medium. There must be a link somewhere between two lives. When your lovely soul was the conductor between Seaton and myself all went well; the sympathy was complete. He told me that as soon as he saw me standing beside you at the wheel all the old love came back to his heart. He waited for me in the Kirtle wood. Faith! Faith! I am to be his wife at the harvest time."

And Faith entered into her joy with enthusiasm. She said frankly, "I think you are a lucky woman. Lord Seaton is weel thocht o', and weel spoken o', and Seaton Court is ane o' the bonniest places in the border land. Though my ain love line was broken in twa, I'm aye glad to see other women happy. And what are you going to wear at your bridal? You sall hae some linen o' my ain spinning for your plenishing, if you'll pleasure me by taking it; I hae a store o' fine damask laid by."

“I would rather have it than gold or jewels. Anything you do for me will bring me joy and prosperity. And, Faith, I have one favor, above all others, to ask of you.”

“If I can grant it, you may say thank you ere you tell me what it is.”

“Then I say thank you; for I only want you to walk with me to church, to be one of my bridesmaids. Lady Jessie Gowrie will keep you company.”

“’Deed you hae taken me unawares; and you hae said thank you for naething. For I hae never put foot in an established kirk, and I dinna think I could bring myself to do sae.”

“Why, Faith! There are as true Christians in it as in the Cameronian kirk. You know that.”

“I dinna ken—may be. My fayther truly allowed them some heritage, for he aye called them ‘the puir wee wrens o’ the Lord, wha had to pick up crumbs o’ salvation from the hand o’ patronage.’ But I hope I am not a bigot, Miss Graeme—and that isna the hale o’ my drawback.”

“What else, Faith?”

“I ken little o’ the dress and ways o’ lords

and ladies; and though I can speak as high English as any o' them, my ain way o' talking is mair natural and easy to me. In kent ways I am a weel kent woman, but among strangers I might be lightlied, and that would hurt me."

"They that lightly you lightly me; yes, and Tilbert, too. Faith, I am not going to be married without the blessing your presence will bring."

"Weel, then, I'll be to promise you." Then her eyes grew bright, and her fine face flushed, and she entered with genuine womanly delight into the talk of satins and laces, and all the happy and splendid paraphernalia of wedding times.

It was well that Faith could afford now to leave her main farm duties to her head men; for during the next three months Terres was very often at Harribee. She told Faith every thing about her lover and her plans, and Lord Seaton got into the habit of calling often at Harribee for her. In his eyes the shepherdess was one of the noblest of women; he was always delighted to find Terres in her company. In fact, Faith got to feel an interest in the couple that had something almost motherly in its forbearance and unselfishness.

In the middle of the barley harvest the marriage took place. There was a great gathering in Graeme Castle to witness its celebration, but among all the titled dames there, the lady of Harribee was the fairest. She was in the topmost prime of her life; she was richly dressed, and she attracted every eye, and every heart by the grave dignity of her manner, and the pleasant, loving kindness that lighted her face, and made her speech, with its little slips into idioms, sweeter than music.

And oh, how proud and happy Lord Graeme was in her presence. It was a great thing to see her in his house. It was simply a wonderful thing to have her upon his arm in the wedding procession. Little he knew what thoughts troubled her all the time! For she did not cross Graeme's threshold without remembering how bitterly her father hated the whole race. For many weeks she had been unable to decide the question of her visit there; and Phemie had given her very little help toward any comfortable assurance of its propriety.

"If the maister was alive," she said, "you wouldna get leave to tak' ane step to Graeme;

but he has been o'er the grave bounds for a term of years. The sheet let down frae heaven taught Simon Peter a gude deal in the way o' not despising folk ; and as the lesson cam' frae heaven, Maister Harribee will hae vera likely in heaven have made oot a few o' the same kind for himsel !”

“In gude Scots, that is, you think I might in charity go to Graeme, eh, Phemie?”

“I did na say that ; but by a mercifu' interpretation o' the vision o' Peter I think sae—maybe—but I'll tak' no obligations anent the matter. I ne'er cared to anger the maister when he was alive, and as for the dead, one never kens whar they are. He might be present this vera minute, and if sae, I think anent the Graeme's, just as he does.”

“I will go this once, Phemie. It is but a neighborly thing to do.”

“Ay, if you hae time to be doing things in life that you feel must only be done this ance. I ne'er thocht I had the time for the like o' them.”

As such conversations had been pretty frequent, they had not left Faith's mind without qualms of uncertainty. And Lord Graeme's

manner made her tremble, and his love-glancing eyes troubled the very depths of her soul. She was glad when the great event was over; when the bride had been carried away with rejoicings, and even the church bells had ceased their clashing wedding peal.

In Graeme Castle, she knew there was high feasting, and the tinkling of violins, and the light measure of dancing feet; but she sat in the calm glow of her own fireside, far more truly happy in the thoughts that stretched backward into the days of her youth, with all their glamor of love and hope, joy and sorrow, labor and rest; and forward into the glory of heaven, and the peace of that love which passeth understanding, which has no variableness neither shadow of turning.

CHAPTER XII.

YOUNG LIVES IN HARRIBEE.

THE year following Miss Graeme's marriage was a very calm and happy one to Faith. Lord and Lady Seaton remained abroad for many months, and after a little delay Lord Graeme also left Scotland. His castle was inexpressibly dull without Terres, and one visit to Faith convinced him that he had not yet reached the fortunate hour of his love.

“But it will come to me, as it came to Terres,” he assured himself; and in the meantime, he threw his heart and time away in the most frivolous pleasures of the great European capitals.

Faith permitted herself to think very little of him. Yet it was impossible altogether to forget the moments in which his life and hers had blended. All of these occasions, were in some respects remarkable; they stood clearly out in memory, and would not glide off into the mass of ordinary events. Usually her reflections

ended in a sighing ejaculation of "Weel, thanks be! I am out o' the way of his temptation!" For she found it impossible to dislike him personally, and consequently his presence, his admiration and the compelling influence of his great love, were not without power over her. Indeed, the very acknowledgment to her own heart that he was, a temptation, was an admission of Graeme's influence and of her own weakness.

But her hands were full of work, and her head was full of a variety of plans. She was adding house to house, and field to field, and her account in Hawick bank was growing to a proportion that made her very often feel a strange sense of responsibility about it. Still with the growth of material wealth, there had come also a far more than proportionate increase of affectionate claims upon her.

She now heard frequently from Agnes, and sometimes from her nephews, who were at a large public school near London. Agnes seldom wrote twice from the same city. It was evident that she had no permanent home, but went with Roland wherever his professional engagements took him. And Faith—in whom

the home instinct was all-powerful—felt a great pity for her in this respect. To have no home! appeared to Faith the saddest of human fates.

But Agnes had her compensations, and they were sufficient for her, for she refused—and perhaps very wisely so—all her sister's urgent requests to visit Harribee again :

“ We have drifted so far apart, dear Faith,” she wrote, “ there is nothing in common between us but our love. My ways, so innocent in my own sight, would just be a pain and a grief to you. My people are not your people ; but oh Faith ! we have the same God ; and when we meet in his house, we shall always be both kin and kind.”

So as Faith went up and down the fells at the lambing time, or watched her men and women in the hay fields, and the harvest fields, or stood spinning on the winter hearth, while the white snow fell noiselessly ; her heart was busy with loving thoughts and projects, and her future peopled with happy dreams.

One night, a little more than a year after the marriage of Lord Seaton to Miss Graeme, Faith sat by her fireside making up her dairy account.

Phemie was knitting in the chimney-corner beside her. The first snow of winter was falling, but the big fires burned with unusual brightness, and there was a charming air of peace and comfort in Harribee Home. When Faith was calculating, Phemie's needles clicked monotonously on, but whenever she began to fold a paper, then Phemie broke the silence with some bit of farm gossip, or some wonder, or reflection of her own.

"Moffat wanted to speak to you Ma'am, about getting married. I just up and told him, the the thing was unfaceable and that Effie Gates at any time was but a rue-bargain. When folks are well-at-ease, they ought to be thankfu', and let well be."

"To be sure, they ought. How many quarts a day does The Graeme Arms take now?"

"Six quarts ma'am, and the cream. There was a meeting last week there, anent getting a piece o' siller ware for the heir o' Seaton—if there should be a heir—and John Dickson was cushion-man."

"John is always in the chair, whatever the meeting is about. Has lady Seaton got home again?"

"They hae been standing on tip-toes for her, for twa weeks. She may hae come, and she may not."

Faith did not answer. She was carrying her pen up a long row of figures. But when it was added and done with, she pushed aside the small round table, and placed her chair before the fire, where she sat musing, or vaguely answering Phemie's comments.

"We shall soon be in the vera hole o' winter, ma'am."

"Yes. I was thinking the ewes had better be brought at once to the lower folds. The snow might drift."

"And that would be a miscomfortune no easy to get o'er."

"Graeme Fell will be the best road, I think."

"Ay, it is next way to whar you want them. Dickey was saying he hasna seen sae mony haws on the white-thorn for seven years. 'Mony haws, mony snaws,' that is well kent."

"Dickey is a clever shepherd. He will take good care of the sheep."

"And his twa eldest lads are weel trained, likewise. He is a sensible fayther. He has

collared his bairns early, and brought them up to wark. There's naething like doing it."

"What ails you at Effie Gates? I thocht she was a nice lassie enough."

"Ay, she has some sma' sense, but a fool has the guiding o' it."

"Weel, weel, Phemie, they must rise early that can please every body."

"That's sae, Ma'am. Every ane buckles their belt their ain way; I'll let Moffat tak the lass he fancies—" She did not finish the sentence, for through the snowy, murky air, there came the sound of bells. Faith sat upright and listened with a smile upon her face. Phemie put her knitting down and said:

"Bless the bells! They bring good news to Seaton and to Graeme. It will be the birth chime, and the heir has come to his hame."

"No doubt! Now, then, send Gibby quickly with my good will, and ask what is the full good news." Then she lay backward in her chair with closed eyes, listening to the floating echoes of the bells and thinking vaguely happy thoughts that drifted between Terres and Agnes and her two nephews.

As she thus sat there was a knock at the

door. She rose up and opened it. A gentleman and two boys stood there ; but before she could say Come in, the boys cried out, " Aunt Faith ! Aunt Faith !" and threw their arms around her neck.

Then what a hubbub of delight filled Faith's quiet home. The gentleman could stay but a few minutes, he had an engagement to keep in Edinburgh, and must catch the coach passing Moss Kirtle within the next hour. But he had brought the boys, and he put into Faith's hand a letter from her sister Agnes. Alas ! the last letter that Agnes would ever write. The few facts relating to her death were quickly told. She had gone with Roland to St. Petersburg, and there Roland had taken a cold which within three days proved fatal. " Madame," he said, " came back to London with the company, but she had long been frail and ill, and her husband's death broke her heart. After reaching England she lived only twelve hours, but her last request was that her sons should be brought to you."

And oh ! in the midst of her grief how proud she was of the charge ! What fine handsome lads they were ! How excitedly she called

Phemie to come and see them! And how happy she was when the old woman turned their faces to the light and kissed and blessed them.

Quickly the table was spread, and she brought out all her good things for the boys—cold meats, and thick cream, and home-made jams; wheat loaf, and six kinds of oat-meal bread, every one finer than the other—anacks, janacks, haver cake and such like. And how the little chaps ate, and drank, and talked; laughing and crying, and clinging to Faith's hands, as if they had known her all their life-time.

At last they were fast asleep in their grandfather's bed. Faith stole in on tiptoes to look again at the bright faces side by side on the great white pillow. And as she gazed, memories of little Davie came silently through her soul, and she knelt down by the sleeping boys and said some words in the ear of God that filled her soul with that incomparable and incommunicable rapture of peace, that earth can neither give nor take away.

She had not yet opened her sister's last letter. She did not feel as if she could do so, until even Phemie had left her, and she had the

sense of absolute solitude. It was written with evidently fast failing power. It was blotted with the last tears Agnes would ever shed. It was like a child's good-by, though full of a woman's sorrow and hope, and it closed with a startling charge.

“Dear, sweet, Faith. My Roland is dead. He was all of life to me, and I am glad to follow him. A friend will bring you the boys. They are your boys, now; and they must kiss you for me. Faith dear, I'll ne'er vex you more now, and I'm not feared to die; not a bit feared to meet either my fayther or mother now. For what was not understood between us here, God will make all right over yonder. At this hour, earth is of small account to me, but right is right, though we live or die, and I must leave you to right a wrong Roland and I have not been permitted to meddle with. I am at my last hour and must say in few words the whole of my care. Roland was really the true lord Graeme. He always knew it. But he liked his own life of change and triumph better than living in Graeme castle, and we aye thought to sort the wrong for our sons that we did not heed sorting for ourselves. You must get the

proofs. Either at Agara in Greece, or at Ancona in Italy they will be found. It is the last words I write. They are true words, though I can say no more now. You must do all. In death, your loving sister,

AGNES GRAEME.'

Faith could hardly credit her own eyesight. She read the letter word by word over again, and then sat long, with tightly-drawn lips and dropped eyes, considering the situation in which she found herself. In that hour she discovered also that Lord Graeme had a far greater hold upon her liking than she had supposed, or had been willing hitherto to admit. To right her nephew meant loss of position, loss of name, and property, perhaps loss of honor, to him. And what of Terres? A son had just been born to her. At present he was heir of Seaton and Graeme; Terres was precisely the woman who would not only resent her action whether it was right or wrong, but also passionately defend her own interests. Davie and Matthew were most likely unaware of their true position, and she meant them to have every thing she possessed, would it do any good then for her to discover a sin so long hid?

So far, with many extended ramifications of thought, her reverie carried her; then with a start she recovered herself. She laid her open hand firmly and positively down upon the table and said, "Faith Harribee, sin is sin, and right is right, and lapse of time alters nothing. What are you reasoning with the deil for? If David is the born lord o' Graeme it isna for you to take thocht o' your ain feelings, or your ain fears or friendships. The lad must hae what belongs to him. But it isna a thing to be done in a hurry, what has waited so long, may wait for the best hour; and I must hae counsel and help beyond my ain wisdom. Sae, I'll e'en say a word to Sandy Todd."

Sandy Todd was a lawyer of great local eminence; a self-contained, pawky, prudent man, who advised Faith in all her business, as he had done Faith's father when he was alive. However, her first care had to be given to the boys' lessons. There was a fine school near Hawick, and she placed them there. But every Friday night they returned to Harribee for two days, and Faith and Phemie and every servant in the house felt the delightful change this weekly visit made in its quiet routine. There was an

air of preparation for it on all the intervening days, and the pleasure of a fresh holiday in each home-coming.

Saturday, if fine, was Faith's great day. She always went to the folds, and the boys helped her up the steep places and chatted to her of a hundred things, past and present, all the way. They were two handsome lads. David had his father's gay temper and high-mettled courage, with a physiognomy decidedly Graeme. Matthew resembled his mother's father. He had his great frame, calm face, and massive head, and was, as Faith proudly told herself, a true Harribee. They made a wonderful change in the life of the old farm. Phemie had to knit for them and Faith had their clothing to look after and their books and their lessons.

Above all she laid upon herself their religious training; for though she highly valued education, she set true, sound principles far beyond it. And she was determined they should stand by the creed for which their ancestors had fought and suffered. Sitting around the fire-side, and standing upon the preacher's stone, she told them again and again the religious history of their race—painted the men as women

paint their heroes, a very little lower than the angels. And their play also cost her many an anxious hour and extra walk. She quickly learned what mothers feel about frozen ponds and foot-ball and horseback riding, and bathing and swimming and rowing. But she loved them better every day, and they grew grandly under her care in all respects.

For some weeks these unusual duties and pleasures kept her fully employed; though she had never forgotten for one day, the grave duty regarding the boy's future which lay before her. But she was a woman inclined to cautious movements. It was a secret of great importance, touching the interests of people who were each, in their own way, dear to her. Twice she went to Todd's and came back without saying a word about the business that really took her there. On her third visit the old man was quite alone, and quite at leisure, and insensibly they fell into a conversation full of reminiscence regarding her father, and events contemporary with his life, as Faith remembered it. It was a snowy day, and the old lawyer stirred the fire frequently to his recollections. Suddenly he said,

“It was a sair blow to your fayther when that bonnie sister o’ yours ran awa’ with that play-acting by-son o’ the Graeme.”

“He was no by-son. He was the lord o’ Graeme his ain self.”

“What are you saying, woman. Dinna let your tongue get awa’ from your senses.”

“I am saying that Roland Graeme, my sister’s husband, was Lord William’s lawful son; and that my nephew David is at this vera hour the true lord o’ that name and ilk.”

“Presarve us a’ Faith. Your words are actionable. Keep a calm sough, woman.”

“I must tell you every thing now, and you must act in the matter for me, Todd, for I can trust your wisdom.”

“Ay, you may do that. I’m no the man to do fool’s wark or go fool’s errands.”

Then she told him plainly all she knew. But Todd pointed out that it was “naething but a suspicion. You havena ane scrap o’ paper to prove your big words Faith, and you may be as ‘morally certain’ as you like, the law kens naething about moral certainty. The scratch o’ a pen would be mair to the purpose.”

“That is precisely what I want you to secure.

Can you go to Italy and Greece and look for these records?"

"Are you daft lassie? Me go to foreign countries! Into the vera presence o' the scarlet woman o' Papistry at that! Na, na! I'll no risk my body, no to speak o' my soul, among Romans and heathens. For tha Greeks are naething but Pagans. I ken weel when I was at schule, learning anent their gods and goddesses; and my fayther gied me a gude lar-roping for it—and weel I deserved it—wasting my time o'er such pairfect nonsense, so to say, even down sin."

"Then Todd, tell me who to send."

"There's men who lay their lives oot for such dark business, and I ken whar to hail them from. Gae your ways hame; I'll get the right man for the wark, and gie him a' the directions he needs.!"

"Thank you, Todd."

"Ou, ay; thanks are weel enough, and I'll no refuse them, but I must understand mistress, that you will be fully responsible for the wherewith. A lawyer's charges are honest and above board. Any fool kens what they'll be, but the deil himself could na tell what charges

may come anent this under-your-hand bit o' business."

"You know weel Todd, that I'm fully able to meet charges, only I trust to you to see that I am not wronged in them."

"They'll be clever folk that cheat my clients. I sall pay your siller oot, as if it were my ain; Faith.

"And you will be sure to keep all secret?"

"Tuts woman! I'm not a natural born talker, and I dinna talk professionally without being paid to do sae. Do you ken any body up or down Esk Water rich enough to pay me to open my mouth against you? Gae your ways hame, Miss Harribee, and dinna think that you hae a monopoly of a' the wisdom and kindness, and honesty in the world."

The interview quite satisfied Faith. She understood the man, and had not a doubt that before she arrived at home, he had taken the the first step towards securing an efficient and reliable agent.

Amid all these duties she found time to go and see Lady Seaton more than once. And she could not help looking with a kind curiosity at the baby Terres put into her arms.

Innocently enough he was usurping her David's right. She almost wished she had never heard of this right. It seemed to put every other thing wrong.

One Friday afternoon she drove to Seaton Court. All was ready for the boys at noon, and she did not feel able to settle herself to work of any kind until she had seen them; and it would be at least four or five hours before they arrived. "I'll take the light tax cart, Phemie," she said, "and go my ways to see Lady Terres for an hour or mair."

It was a dull, gray day, but Faith did not mind gray weather. For the baby lord, she had procured from Glasgow one of those fine sewed muslin robes for which that city was famous, and Phemie had added to the present a pair of knitted lambs'-wool socks. Faith's heart was full of happy thoughts. She anticipated the pleasure of a chat with Terres; she anticipated the pleasure of her boys' visit. She had no cares, and she had many a bright hope.

Terres was delighted to see her. Her pretty present was just the one nobody else had thought of. "It is grand enough for a christen-

ing robe, Faith," she said, "and indeed, we are reckoning upon you for the godmother."

"That I can ne'er be, Terres. You ken in my ain kirk, the bairn's mother stands wi' the bairn at his baptizing, and wha sae fit to do it? If you dinna teach the wee laddie his duty to God and his ain soul, it's no vera likely any other woman will do your duty. Also, I hae twa lads o' my ain, now."

"Yes, I have heard of them; the children of your sister Agnes." She grew suddenly quiet, and ended her reflections by lifting her own boy from his satin-lined cradle, and kissing him with a fervor which scarcely required words to explain. Faith knew the thoughts in her heart. She knew that Terres said in that kiss—"right or wrong, my boy, your mother will assert your claim, and suffer no one to put you aside."

Almost immediately after this silent act of motherly devotion, Lord Graeme entered the room. His face lightened all over when he saw Faith, and he made the time pass so pleasantly that she forgot the hour until the falling snow warned her of her distance from home. Then she rose in a sudden hurry, and Lord

Graeme went to order her cart. When it came to the door, he was sitting in it, holding the reins, and cloaked for the coming storm.

"I am going to drive you, Miss Harribee," he said. "We shall have a heavy fall, and I know the road down Seaton Fell better than you do." She wanted to oppose the offer, but could not. Several servants were standing around; she disliked to dispute and refuse before them. It seemed better to quietly take the seat beside the voluntary driver, and suffer herself to be comfortably tucked in from the coming storm.

Lord Graeme was in the highest spirits. "Why Faith!" he cried, "to have you beside me is such a piece of luck as I never dreamed of! To have you all to myself! A hundred thousand thanks to the snow clouds!" He rattled away like a school-boy. It was the most glorious drive he had ever taken. He wished every mile was ten times as long; and when they reached Harribee, he vowed he was so perished with hunger and cold that simple charity required Faith to ask him to supper.

He had not named the boys, he had not seen

them. Certainly he had heard of their arrival, but during this happy drive he had quite forgotten them, until he entered the glowing house-place with Faith. Then they sprang to meet her with clasping arms and resounding kisses. It was a shock to Graeme, a shock so great, that for a few minutes, he could not recognize nor understand the feelings the children had aroused.

He looked at them curiously and with some irritation. Their presence would at least spoil the confidential talk he hoped to have with Faith. So far, they were an intrusion, and a disagreeable one. But as the supper progressed, he watched them and listened to them with a singular interest, casting many a furtive glance at David, but talking more to Matthew who had a grave and quiet manner that courted confidential chat.

After supper they went early to their room, but Lord Graeme drew his chair closer to the hearth, and with Faith's approval lit a cigar, and smoked slowly and silently during the hour in which she was receiving her servants' reports, and giving her last orders. He did not appear to be watching her, but he saw her slightest

movement, and even speculated upon the bits of conversation he heard her hold with men and women. But in the main his thoughts were with the two sleeping boys. David was so like his brother William, Matthew had a look which constantly recalled Faith, and which had perhaps unconsciously inclined his grand uncle to him. At that hour he wished heartily that the thing he had done was undone.

When at last Faith took her knitting and sat down, the night was wearing toward eight o'clock. In that simple household, he knew that he would be expected to leave within an hour, and he turned to Faith with a face that needed no words to interpret it.

Alas! he saw no response in her eyes to the question he asked. There was indeed a vague trouble in them that puzzled him, a something that was a blending of love and sorrow and reproach. It startled him by its resemblance to some feeling in his own heart. But it was impossible she could know any thing of his sin! And yet he believed Roland had judged him. And Roland's children might have heard their father's suspicions, and repeated them to their aunt. It was a new fear. He could not put it

down. He seemed to read it in Faith's face. Yet he stooped toward her and took the knitting from her hands, and held them firmly as he said :

“ You know what words are in my heart, and on my lips, Faith. You know how long and honestly I have loved you. When will you be my wife ? ”

“ There are new and dear charges come into my life. What hae you to say anent them ? ”

“ I will make them as welcome in Graeme as if they were my own boys. Upon my honor I will. ”

She took her hands quickly from him, and said, “ You hae given me a sair heart-ache this night, lord, but ane thing is sure as sure can be. I canna say yes or no to you, yet. ”

“ You love me Faith ? ever so little, you love me ? ”

“ I'll no say but what I think mair o' you than of other folks ; but waes me ! We may love many a thing, and want many anither thing, that would neither be right for ourselves nor yet gude for others. I am walking on a dark road ; to-night, at least, I canna let you keep me company. ”

“ But some other time, Faith? Say yes, dear woman ! ”

“ I canna tell. It will depend maistly upon yourself—I’m no ready to speak. I dinna ken my own heart. I’m no sure o’ what is my right way yet.”

“ Then I must wait and hope.”

“ Ay, and you must be taking the road also ; for it’s candle douping, and there’s folk that would see wrang if their e’en were out.”

“ Then good-night, Faith ! I know that you love me a little ; and to-night I know, for some reason or other, you fear and doubt me also.”

“ Where did you learn sae much, lord ? ”

“ In my heart.”

And he rode away into the snow, suddenly full of the new terror that had come to him—the terror that Faith suspected his sin. If at last it was to stand between them ! Oh, how he regretted it ! And so,

“ With repentance his only companion he lay,
And a dismal companion is she.”

CHAPTER XIII.

RIGHT, BEFORE EVERY THING.

“ It fortifies my soul to know
That, though I perish, Truth is so.
That, howsoe'er I stray or range,
Whate'er I do, Thou dost not change.
I steadier step when I recall,
That if I slip, Thou dost not fall.”

—CLOUGH.

THE winter proved to be a very hard one. The snow lay deep, the shepherds had a bitter time of it, and many sheep were ‘smoored’ in the drifts. But inside Harribee there was a great deal of the purest home pleasure. Phemie and Faith had such wonderful talks and consultations about the boys. Such confidences to share at the week ends! There was not a scholar in the school with whom they were not, in a certain way, familiar. If David and Matthew liked them, they did also. If David and Matthew disapproved them, then Faith and Phemie shook their heads when they

were named, and were fully convinced of their original and acquired sins. Very frequently, so frequently indeed that Faith was compelled to notice the circumstance, Lord Graeme found an excuse to call at Harribee on Saturday. One Friday night he stopped just as the boys arrived, complained that his horse was sick, and asked to remain until Faith could send a man to the castle for a fresh mount for him. He made himself so interesting to the little fellows that they opened up for him their whole budget of school news; and when he left, he 'tipped' them so handsomely that Faith felt compelled to interfere.

But Graeme persisted in standing by his gift. "The boys belong to me, as well as to you, Faith," he said; "they are Graemes, not Harribees, and I know what a tip is, to a lad at school."

She thought comparatively little of the investigation which she had left with Sandy Todd. She did not visit him again on the subject. Perhaps, in her most secret consciousness she wished that it would prove unsuccessful. She did not want to think so evilly of Lord Graeme. She did not dare to imagine

what course she must take if the assertions of Roland and Agnes were correct. In the meantime Graeme was certainly gaining a great hold upon her affection. The boys were a common ground upon which they met with a familiarity impossible under any other condition. She began to look with something very like love upon the elegant, handsome man, who was so happy on her hearth-stone; who watched her with such unspeakable admiration; who took such an interest in David and Matthew, and who was so favorably thought of by them. When David told of some race in which he had been the winner, or some fight in which he had been the victor, or when Matthew recited his last Greek chorus, or showed some extraordinary prize of merit, Graeme and Faith were sure to exchange glances of pride and satisfaction about the matter; and these glances were wonderful vehicles of more personal affection and interest. In fact, without saying one word of love, Graeme was wooing Faith in the most irresistible way possible to a woman of her character and position.

In the spring she had a visit from Todd. He took her a little by surprise when he came.

First, because she was not a woman who brought to-morrow, and next week, and next month into to-day—not one of those restless natures who are forever calling to some one in the watch tower, “Do you see any body coming?” Her nature was calm because it was moulded in grand proportions, without the littlenesses that produce ‘fuss.’ Then, it was also a very unusual thing for Todd to leave his office.

“But the air was sae caller, and the wind sae fresh, I thocht I would hae a mouthfu’ of the spring,” he said, as he lighted from his pony at Faith’s door.

He did not immediately speak of the business on which he had come. A variety of topics interested him during the early lunch which was spread for his benefit. But as he sat smoking his pipe to a glass of toddy he relieved his mind of the news he had brought.

“You are five hundred pounds oot of pocket, Miss Harribee.”

“Then you have found no proofs?”

“Not the scratch o’ a pen.”

“Vera gude! I dinna feel as if I were out of pocket.”

“Noo, if you will take my advice, you will

neither meddle nor mak' in other folk's business again. Five hundred pounds! Certie! You have paid for your curiosity."

"Naething found? Naething heard?"

"Naething at a' found. Plenty o' talk from thae foreign creatures he heard; but what o' that?"

"Talk?"

Talk anent Mr. Roland Graeme's mither. But Lord! what do they ken anent gude morals. They called her 'my lady,' but that means just naething."

"Vera weel, Todd. Let the matter drop—and forget it."

"It were a pity to refuse you, when you seek sae little. I dinna care to mak' an enemy o' lord Graeme; and I hae been kent a' my life for keeping my mouth shut and my een open."

At first Faith felt a decided satisfaction in the news Todd had brought. She was light-hearted about it. She had not fully understood until the fear was lifted from her mind how great would have been her sorrow, if it had been confirmed. She thought still more kindly of Graeme, for she wished to atone for the wrong she had done him in her own mind. And

she did not feel as if the boys were any losers by this loss of a false hope. There was enough in Harribee to give them both a good start in life, and she had a firm belief in the ability of her nephews to make their own place in the world.

For an hour or two she was very happy. Then suddenly she knew not how, she could not determine from what source, a most positive conviction of the truth of her sister's dying declaration forced itself into her mind. It came with a power apparently unreasonable, and yet not to be reasoned away. Involuntarily, she found herself saying—"It is true, for all that! Agnes is right in spite o' Todd!" She was more miserable than she had been before.

That very evening she met Graeme on the moor. She had been up the fell to speak with her head shepherd, and was hurrying home, for the sun had set, and the night was falling damp and chilly. Graeme had his gun with him and some dogs, but he saw her, and hurried forward to meet her. She had never before seen such a dark and hopeless look upon his face. He did not seem able to talk, and every effort ended in a few monosyllables.

“You are ill, lord.”

“No, Faith, I am unhappy. I had a bad dream last night, and it has haunted me all day. I have always laughed at dreams, but I cannot rid myself of this one.”

“Put a bad dream awa’ with a gude deed. Is there nae body you can do a kindness to?”

“There are always the boys. Suppose I send a handsome tip to them.”

“They dinna need it. That will do you no gude.”

“They are the only people on earth it will do me good to be kind to.”

It was not the words themselves, but the remorse in his sombre eyes, and the weary, hopeless look on his face, which affected Faith. In some way, not quite evident to her, she understood from what cause the man was suffering. There were a few moments of painful silence—a few moments in which all her bright dreams and hopes passed into a dark cloud; then she said with an evident effort—

“If you would tell me, lord.”

“Tell you what, Faith?”

“I thocht maybe you had a trouble on your heart.”

He did not answer. They walked on in the misty twilight a little further apart than usual, until they came to Harribee Gate. Then he said good-night, and Faith watched the mournful figure turn away from her, and gradually become a part of the gloomy landscape.

And not even the bright fireside, nor the comfortable tea, nor Phemie's cheery bits of gossip could put away the lonesome, unhappy memory of the man she loved. Yes, it had taken but this one revelation of him in trouble, to discover to Faith how truly and how tenderly she loved him. With all his faults she loved him. She shirked none of them that night, as she sat musing on her quiet hearth. And she found then how easy it is for a loving woman to excuse the unworthiness of her idol. "I'm no faultless myself," she whispered. "I'm full o' faults. And while we were a' sinners, God loved us. Forbye, there is a deal o' gude in Graeme—he likes the lads—he is sorry for the wrong he has done them—he is in a sair strait—I'm no sure myself what I would do in it. Oh, Graeme! Graeme; I ne'er thocht to love you as I do this hour."

While Faith sat musing thus, Graeme had taken a very decided step. He reached Seaton Court about seven o'clock, and found his sister at dinner. Seaton was in Edinburgh, and he looked upon his absence as a piece of good fortune. Terres was always delighted to see her brother, but this night his gloom and silence offended her.

"I will send for the baby," she said. "He is growing so fast and so bonnie, Tilbert. Perhaps he may charm the evil spirit out of you."

"Do not send for him. I do not care to see the child."

"What on earth? or rather, what from some lower place possesses you?"

"I don't want to see the child. That is enough."

"Quite. May I ask why you came here to-night? It is my opinion you have been drinking your senses away."

"I have not touched wine for a week. Terres, I had a dream about Will—"

"Oh, this is delicious! Tilbert Graeme frightened at his own dreams!"

"It is not my dream. It came from some one, from somewhere, beyond me."

“Nonsense! You have been worrying yourself ever since those boys of Roland’s came to Harribee! You think of them continually; of course you dream of them. Don’t be a fool, Tilbert.”

“I think, on the contrary, that I am coming to my senses. Terres, you are well married. Your boy has the lordship of Seaton; why hamper him with another, to which he has no right?”

“Pick your words more prudently, Tilbert. I may have other children. I am not going to lift my little finger from Graeme. If you want to be a fool, I shall not let you.”

“I shall not ask your permission. I am sure that Roland’s eldest son ought to have Graeme.”

“Indeed! Pray, what of yourself? Will you marry Faith Harribee and be her head shepherd?”

“It would be heaven on earth compared with the false position in which I stand to-night.”

“I hope you may die before you perpetrate such a piece of mad folly, Tilbert.”

“I hope not, until I have found courage to commit it. Terres, if you go into one of your

old tempers I shall leave you. They are Seaton's privilege now. I want you to accustom yourself to the idea, that Graeme is going to David Graeme."

"You don't love me now, Tilbert. I used to be first of all with you."

"I am no longer first with you. You put Seaton before me. Very well."

"It is Faith Harribee's doing. Oh, I know it is. How I do hate that woman!"

"In an indirect way, it is Faith's doing. You are right. To live an hour or two occasionally in Faith's company is to catch virtue. Many things look differently to me, since I knew Faith."

"She shall never enter Seaton Court again."

"That will be your loss."

"And pray, when are you going to confess to her? Oh, I know you, Tilbert. It is simply your last fling for her favor. You want to persuade her she has reformed you. Pshaw! You can not deceive me."

"I shall tell Faith as soon as I get courage to tell her. I believe it will separate us forever. All the same, I will do right—if I can."

"Have you thought of the consequences?"

You know well that she is made of that old Covenanting grit. Though her heart breaks, though the heavens fall, she will prosecute you for robbing Roland. The savings of all these years will be devoured in paying back rentals. You may perhaps save yourself a convict's doom for lack of evidence of intention, but public opinion will pillory you. Think of the shame I must suffer with you—and my poor, innocent little baby also. Have pity upon me, Tilbert !” She put her arms around his neck and sobbed bitterly. Her tears were genuine ones ; he found it hard to resist them ; yet he pushed her gently away from him, and left the room.

She had no idea he had gone back to Graeme until an hour afterward. Then she was very unhappy. For the first time in her life she had found her tears and caresses had been ineffectual with her brother.

Early next morning she went to Graeme Castle. Lord Graeme had left it at daylight. The rapidity and suddenness of this move disconcerted her. She walked up and down her old home full of fear and anger. But the ancient place, though the air seemed heavy with evil memories, roused in her a passion of rare-

devotion, which made her, for the time, feel capable of any deed necessary to prevent her loss of all interest in it. In her mind it had come to be a question of whether her son should own it, or the grandson of that Italian singing woman and the son of Agnes Harribee. She felt the superiority of her own right; and she was sure it was superior.

After wandering about the familiar rooms, and feeding her anger on a variety of information offered her by the older servants of the place, she determined to go home by way of Harribee. It would be a pleasure to be ill-tempered to Faith. She began to tell herself that she had permitted the shepherdess of Harribee far too much familiarity. A snub would be a good thing, and put her back in her own place.

When Faith saw the Seaton carriage approaching, she was not much pleased. She was counting out from great oak chests the napery for the spring bleaching; fine damask cloths and napkins were lying around; linen sheets and pillow cases, and whole webs of fine flax cloth, were being examined and noted previous to being sent up to the bleaching ground

on Harribee fell. The girls with their baskets and watering cans were waiting, each one for her task, and Faith was desirous to get them off ere the sunny mid-day was lost. She wondered, too, what brought Lady Seaton at such a like hour, but she went to meet her with her usual pleasant smile and word.

“I am not coming in, Miss Harribee. I only thought I would tell you that Lord Graeme has gone to London. There is no saying when he will be back, but I suppose you know all about his movements.”

Faith caught in a moment the tone of her address, and with a dignity which was not impaired by fretfulness, answered :

“I ken naething of Lord Graeme’s movements, Lady Seaton. What for should I?”

“He has not been easy to live with lately. I must say I blame you.”

“You had nae right to blame me.”

“Come, come, Faith Harribee ! Every one knows he has—”

“My Lady Seaton, if you hae nae particular business with me this morning, I will be excused. I am busy getting the bleaching women ready for the hills.”

"Is that of more importance than Lord Graeme?"

"To me, my napery is of vera great importance. I am but a simple woman having my daily duty to heed, and the duties o' many others hanging to my duty. I hope the young lord is well."

"Quite well."

"Then gude morning, my lady."

And with a calm face and erect head she crossed her own door-stone again; hiding her annoyance and heart-pain in such a hurried charge to the girls that they told each other, as they climbed the fell, "Mistress was gey put oot wi' fine lady visitors sae early in the morning."

Faith was indeed very much put out by the visit. Lord Graeme's mood on the preceding evening had troubled her, and there was a quiet insolence in the manner of Terres which not only wounded but angered her. She felt in her own heart, that if Tilbert Graeme did not redeem the promises that his every glance had lately made her, he would be the basest of men.

"But I hae nae luck in love," she murmured:

“as soon as I like a lad he turns awa’ from me. But lord or shepherd, I’ll no waste my life for any of them—only, I did think he was true! It’s weel I never let him ken how much I thocht o’ him! It’s weel I never let him run awa’ with my judgment—folks will talk—ay, they’ll talk any way; they’ll say I’ve lost my lad again—weel, weel, I’m blythe that my heart’s my ain—and my siller is my ain, and I hae the boys yet. Let him go! Folks canna hae luck on every side, and if I havena love luck, I hae siller luck.” Then she sat down and leaned her head in her hands, and the tears dropped upon the table, and she saw them with a start, and lifted her apron and wiped them away.

And with the action, the usual pious frame of her mind asserted itself, and brought her almost unconscious comfort. “Bide a wee while longer,” she whispered, as if addressing her own misty eyes. “Bide a wee, and God shall wipe all your tears awa’. Ay, it will take God’s hand to do that work; for He will hae to wipe out all memories of wrong and pain, all memories of love slighted, and love lost, all memories of unkindness, and poortith, and hunger, and cauld, and weariness, and woes

beyond counting. The hand of God! The blessing, comforting hand that will wipe all tears awa'!"

Then Phemie came bustling in with twin lambs that a shepherd had just found on the bleak hill-side—little, shivering, perishing things—and Faith's pity was instantly aglow. She sat down with them close to the fire and fed them with warm milk, and cuddled them gently to her breast. And she forgot her own wounded feelings and love-ache in their want and wretchedness. For, after all, she had that faith in God, and that faith in herself, which enabled her when all looked darkest, to go right on, bating no jot of heart and hope.

CHAPTER XIV.

A FATAL HUNTING PARTY.

“ Day and night God standeth,
Scanning each soul as it landeth
Pale from the passion of death,
Cold from the cold dark river,
As, staggering, blind with death,
With trembling steps, yet fleet,
Over the stones of darkness
They stumble up to his feet.”

IF intervals could be bridged in life as they are in books, how many weary hours might be avoided. But the ‘wait’ of sorrow and anxiety, as of love and joy, must be endured to the last moment. Never had Faith found the days so long, and the nights so long, and work so monotonous, and the intercourse of common daily life so dreary. Archie Renwick’s desertion had been bad enough, but Lord Graeme’s sudden and silent flight had elements in it far more painful and mortifying. She kept assuring herself that she neither

hoped nor expected any explanation of it, and yet she was conscious of constantly watching the clock and the fell road for the postman. Lady Seaton's behavior also puzzled and chagrined her. She could conceive of no cause for it, but the simple insolence of birth and wealth ; and her heart was bitter with a sense of wrong and slight, as she walked ten days and nights through the furnace, in which she felt all the hopes and dreams of her later life to be perishing.

As yet she could not think of the revenge within her power. It would be too much like revenge to give it a moment's consideration ; for she was determined that every movement in that matter should spring from a sense of what was right and just. So she suffered dumbly and ignorantly, not even divining the true sources from which her restless discontent sprang.

One afternoon, ten days after Lord Graeme's departure, the oppression on her heart was very great. She felt miserable and so inclined to forgetfulness that she determined to have her sorrow out with herself upon the hills. "I'm not a lassie," she thought as she climbed Har-

ribee Fell with rapid steps, " I'm not a lassie, and I ken weel, I havena loved wisely—a man whom my fayther would only know in the way o' buying and selling—a man whom I am vera sure has been guilty o' a great [crime—a man who makes nae profession o' religion; and is said whiles, to drink mair than he should do. What for am I loving him?"

She asked the question of her heart impetuously, and her heart could only penitently answer, " I dinna ken." She reasoned with herself, and made resolutions many and strong for her guidance in the future. And she was so in earnest, that she forgot the time, and forgot the atmosphere full of misty rain, until there came a chilling blast, and the nearest cloud began to sprinkle the bubbling pool. Then she looked around, and saw that she was three miles from home. Down the brown hills, the shepherds, far apart, were descending for the night, and she knew, that however quick she walked Phemie would have become uneasy about her, ere she reached Harribee.

Under the pressure of haste, she put aside her thoughts of personal pain and sorrow, and with firm and rapid steps took the nearest way

to her house. It was raining heavily when she reached its shelter, and she was physically worn out. But oh how pleasant was her own hearth so white and ruddy! How comforting the careful interest of her servants! How delicious the good tea and hot cakes! How soothing the hour when the meal was over and Phemie bid her, sit down and bethink herself.

She was weary and she fell asleep; deeply, sweetly asleep. Phemie passed in and out; the servants came home and chatted gayly over their supper in the kitchen, but she heard nothing. It seemed as if she were gathering up the arrears of her late broken and restless slumbers. When at length she opened her eyes she perceived that she had a companion. Lord Graeme sat before the fire, but so motionless, that at first she thought him only a part of a dream. His eyes were fixed upon the blazing wood, his face pale as death, the bistre shadows around his eyes almost black. He looked thin and haggard also, as a man might look, who had been watching, or working, without adequate rest; and his clothing, always as neat in all its details, was wet with rain, and

spattered with mud from head to feet, as if he had been riding hard and recklessly.

She took in the picture at a glance ; then she rose and said softly.

“ When came you, lord ? Oh, but I am glad to see you ! ”

She was going to approach him, but he put out his arm as if to stop her. “ Stand where you are, Faith ! I have something to tell you. When you have heard it, you will not want to give me your hand. You will despise me forever.”

She only gazed at him with a great pity. She felt, and knew what was coming. She could not say a word either to help, or to deter him. “ Faith ! I am the greatest scoundrel in Scotland ! Roland Graeme was my brother William’s lawful son ; my title, and my home belong rightfully to David. Oh woman ! woman ! I love you so dearly, that I am forced to tell you my sin. You have made me feel it to be a sin. I am as wretched in your pure presence as a devil would be in heaven. Forgive me ! Faith, for any sake, forgive me ! ” He spoke the words in a low rapid voice, that seemed vocal with the agony in the man’s heart.

In a moment she had comprehended that to let him know she was already aware of his sin, would deeply injure the purity of his contrition, and lessen to his own perception the moral grandeur of his confession. He would think, "she has already condoned the offense. Perhaps, after all, it is not so very great." So she stood speechless, motionless, her eyes fixed upon the proud man acknowledging his crime. He did not spare himself. He only spared Terres. He told her how the temptation had first come to him, and how he had given way to it, and suffered through all his future years from the consciousness that Roland felt and knew him to be a rascal and utterly despised him.

As he spoke, the passion of his remorse mastered him. He stood up, and flinging downward his hands, palms upward, he said, "I will give up all I possess to the boys! I will go away forever! I will forget the name I have dishonored! I will leave you Faith—leave you dearest—never, never to see your face again!"

Then she stepped lightly to his side. She put her arms around his neck. She wept upon

his shoulder, she turned her beautiful face to his and voluntarily kissed him.

A breathless silence followed an act of love so perfect and so amazing. He held her close to his heart, but he felt as if he were losing all consciousness in his great bliss. He did not dare to speak. And Faith by the very grandeur of her nature understood that it was her place in this extremity of love and pardon to speak first.

"My dear one," she whispered, "you have sinned and you have suffered, and confessed your sin. I will help you to atone for it. Let us sit down and consider the best way."

Then he took from his breast pocket a package and put it into Faith's hands. She understood without a word that it contained the papers necessary to establish David's right. And when she had secured them, she called for hot water, and made tea for the weary man, and would not suffer him to talk until he had been refreshed.

Afterward they sat down together and reviewed more calmly the position in which the nominal lord found himself. The circumstances were familiar to Faith. She had gone over

them for many weeks in her mind, and she laid shortly down the plan she had evolved as most prudent and reasonable.

“David kens naething, and Matthew kens naething. If they had the news now, they wouldna be capable of judging all sides right. It would be wrong to ask them to decide such a question now. It would hinder the plans I hae for them, and they are gude plans, and will make fine men o’ them. When they are nineteen they shall choose their professions; when they are twenty-one I will tell David what place he has to fill. The lads like you. I will not hae a word said to them to spoil their liking.”

“And in the meantime——”

“You are trustee of the estate. You will do the best thing you can with it. When David is a man you will not find him hard to settle with, and I shall take care that baith lads are educated fitting for any station they may hae to fill.”

“I will help you all I can, Faith.”

He had too much delicacy at that hour to press his personal desires; too much joy and trust in the wonderful proof she had given him

of her regard to appear to be less than fully content with it. A great confidence and peace was between them, none the less because they did not put it into the conventional, lover-like phrases. And yet in both hearts there was the sadness of all late pleasures—a sadness not to be deprecated; containing to those hearts capable of entertaining it, the deepest elements of joy.

When Lord Graeme departed, Faith called Phemie. The old woman entered with an air of disapproval and injury, and the affectation of being sleepy and worn out.

“Phemie, I have promised to marry Lord Graeme.”

“Yes ma’am. If a’ falls oot to your ordering, you’ll maybe do that same; but there’s slips, plenty o’ them in life. However, whate’er is determined by God, is sure to happen.”

“You might say a few pleasanter words than those, Phemie.”

“Lovers arena the only folk living or dead. I was thinking on a’ sides. If it be true that marriages are made in heaven, I can weel foretel hinderances you havena thocht o’; for I’m sure and certain maister didna hear your name and

Tilbert Graeme's thegither without speaking his mind anent it, even to the Lord himsel'. I dinna believe Matthew Harribee in heaven would hear tell o' it."

"Surely you don't think people remember earthly anger and dislikes in heaven?"

"What for no? Arena the martyrs aye crying oot for God to avenge them on their enemies? That doesna look like they forgot their earthly wrangs. But I hae naething to say—neither this nor that; folks that will marry must marry—if so be, they can."

Yet in spite of Phemie's evident disapproval, Faith was very happy, and the next few months were an over-payment of delight for all her loving heart had hitherto missed. Very quietly, but with a positiveness there was no gainsaying, Lord Graeme took his place in Harribee as her betrothed husband, He himself explained to the boys his relationship to their aunt, and from this time they became as much a part of his life, as they were of Faith's. He bought each of them a fine horse; and he taught them to ride, and to shoot, and to fish. He set aside rooms in Graeme Castle for their use, and speedily let the servants understand that

they could not be too respectful to his nephews.

And they returned his attentions with that boyish affection which is so pure, and true, and enthusiastic. To David and Matthew no man living was so clever, and so good as uncle Tilbert. In this delightful intercourse the summer sped happily away. The neighborhood had quietly accepted the proposed marriage as a suitable one, and it was generally understood that it would take place soon after the new year. In such case, a rumor had got afloat that the Graemes would go abroad for some time. Faith, when asked if this were really her intention, only smiled. It was a smile which could be taken as the interrogator desired.

Only Lady Seaton had shown any dissatisfaction. She felt as if both Tilbert and Faith were contemplating a great wrong to her son ; and her coolness pained Faith. "I rejoiced with her when her love came a' right," she reflected. "I did a' I could to make the bright brighter and the sweet sweeter. I wish she had been as gude to me ! But Time will prove a' things, and at the long last, she will think better o' me."

When the summer vacation was over the boys did not return to Hawick. They were to go to Eton, after the marriage, and in the meantime they studied with the dominie. Graeme had been an Eton boy, and he had thoroughly interested the lads in the life of its mimic world. And gradually even Phemie began to contemplate the great changes approaching as part and parcel of existences foreordained by infinite and unerring wisdom—"and it is oor place," she said, "to be walking cheerfully the road He has ordered; no to be wishing it either wider or smoother, or in any ither direction."

One morning in November, Harribee was early astir. It was a hunting morning, and the youths were to have their first introduction to the field. The weather was gray and rimy with an east wind and a cloudy sky, and the ground as soft as desirable. David was greatly excited, Matthew quite as much, though holding himself in firmer control, and both looked very natty and handsome in their pink jackets and top boots. Faith was nervous, but she would not damp their delight by her weak fears and doubts. She gave them a hot, substantial

breakfast, and never until they were mounting spoke one word of warning. Then it was only, "Matthew, I am not feared for you, either on foot or in saddle, for you are aye canny and careful; but David, dear lad, look to your horse, for he isna the one who will look after you."

"All right, aunt. Why, my horse is the best hunter in Eskdale. Uncle says so. He is a good jumper, clever at doubles, safe at timber, bold at water, and not a runner to beat him. I intend to show what he can do to-day. And we are not going far. You will hear the music, I'll warrant."

With lifted caps and bright faces they cantered off in the gray light, both sitting in their saddles as if they had grown there. The meet was at Graeme, and all along the road, scarlet-coated men were trotting, and riding, and galloping to the rendezvous; the young ones larking over the fences; the elder ones saving themselves and their horses by opening the gates.

When they reached the castle, the lawn was all alive. There were drags drawn by four horses, and light dog-carts, and gigs, every one

laden with men well muffled-up, but showing a bit of pink somewhere, either at wrist or collar. Lord Seaton was there, and the Earl of Lanark, and Sir Thomas Mowbray and gentlemen and farmers in such numbers that the ground looked like a fair. Graeme's servants were passing in and out among them; some serving old ale in great silver cups, others carrying wicker baskets full of sandwiches, and bread and cheese.

The hounds were whimpering around the whipper-in, who was feeding them with crumbs out of his pocket, as he leaned forward on his horse, talking to a farmer about a fox which had been shot by a poacher.

"Yes," he complained, with an angry face, what wi' poachers, and traps, and poison, vera few foxes now die a natural death."

"Meaning that they are not eaten alive by the Graeme hounds, Carr?" asked David, laughing.

"Just sae, Maister Graeme, just sae. That is surely a mair natural death for a fox than traps, and the like o' that."

Just at this point Lord Graeme appeared with a little group of aristocrats around him.

"Move on sir?" asked the huntsman; "is it move on?" Graeme slightly nodded in reply.

"Now, then, gentlemen!" Ware hounds, if you please;" and surrounded by them, and his whips, and more than a hundred horsemen, he made for the covert a mile away.

While all were waiting there, Graeme rode up to the boys. He praised their appearance, and gave them some points about the covert to be hunted, and some warnings concerning timber likely to be crossed. His face was unusually bright, his manner particularly kind and careful, and while he was talking some one cried, "*He's away! He's away!*" and with the words, a few loud, decisive blasts from the huntsman's horn confirmed the cry. Then,

"The musical confusion"

Of hounds and echoes in conjunction,

rang through and through the misty air. The fox lightly cantered along the hedge side. The sheep gazed at him spell-bound, and some bullocks in a neighboring field, with noses touching the ground and flying tails, jumped upwards and sideways for joy.

Faith heard the distant music, and was not quite easy about it. Not that she had any fear

concerning her boys or her lover. She was thinking of her sheep. For she knew right well if the fox took by Harribee, the moment the sheep saw the hounds they would instantly follow them.

“But the collies are on the fells, Ma’am,” said Phemie, “and they’ll be clever sheep that will get their ain way, if Laddie and Lassie are there. Forbye, the hunters are as keen to keep awa’ fra the sheep as you can be to hae them. They dinna like to find a hundred muttons wi’ their fat jolting sides blocking up the only passage in a high fence. Little gude their hunting whips are on such a mass o’ panting wool, and Dickey told me last season that he saw a whole field stopped by a score or twa o’ crazy sheep.”

“The foolish things!”

“Ay, they are the silliest o’ living creatures! Human beings are weel evened wi’ them. Ne’er too young either to be foolish. A lambie just born, if it sees the hounds, will leave its mither and rin with them till it drops dead.”

“And the puir fox! I’m sorry for him too.”

“Sae am I, ma’am. Vera sorry. Puir thing, wi’ his supple limbs and his stout heart going

through boughs and briars and thorns straight as an arrow for his earth; and then maist likely finding it stopped; and then undaunted awa' again until his breath and not his heart gies oot, and then dying amid the barking, howling pack with ne'er a cry or a single moan. It's a cruel thing."

"Ay, it's cruel; sae is fishing for that matter. If the fish screamed as it was wounded and lifted out of the water, I wonder if men folk would fish?"

"Ay, would they, if they wanted to."

So the two women conversed as Phemie went in and out of the house-place, and Faith sat sewing in the light of the broad window. About noon she rose and was folding up her work when she heard the mad gallop of a horse towards Harribee. She seized a plaid, threw it around her shoulders and went to the door. Dickey had just driven up in the tax cart and he also stood watching the approaching rider. He came straight to Faith.

"Miss Harribee, you must come with me at once. Lord Graeme has been thrown. He is very much hurt. He can not be moved."

She was deathly white; she shook like a reed

in a tempest, and asked in a voice low and thick with terror, "Where is he?"

"In the green acre—by the gate. He was leaping it; pulled up in the leap I expect. The horse is dead. You have no time to lose."

She folded the plaid over her head and motioned to Dickey to take her into the cart. The next moment she was dashing along the stony road, the Galloway nag keeping step and step with the hunter. The mile and a half was done in an incredibly short time, for in a few minutes Faith was at the sorrowful tryste. Graeme lay where he had fallen. A few men were around him, others standing by their horses in solemn groups at a little distance.

Lord Seaton came to meet her. "Faith," he said, "he has been asking for you continually; you, and only you. I feared you would be too late."

She did not answer. Her eyes were fixed upon the prostrate figure. She went rapidly to it, knelt down by its side, and bent her face close to the one almost clay.

"Tilbert, my beloved, I am here!"

His agony was almost unendurable, but he smiled brightly and gasped out, "the time of

parting is at hand—quick!—kiss me, dear one !
Faith ! Faith !

All withdrew to a short distance ; kindly and wisely oblivious of that last solemn, tender parting. In ten minutes it was over. She rose up from the wet earth in a maze of anguish. Lord Seaton covered the poor shattered body with a plaid and then turned to her. “ Let me take you home now, Faith. Let me take you to Seaton. Terres and you can weep together.”

She shook her head positively, and covering her face with her hands moaned like some wounded creature. The men watched her with pity ; there was hardly a dry eye there ; but all words of consolation seemed such a mockery that no one attempted to offer them. David and Matthew she put gently aside ; and when Dickey brought forward the cart, she passed him with a gesture which signified that she wished him to go home without her. She could not bear the thought of that inert endurance of suffering and sympathy which it included ; and throwing her plaid over her head, she took the narrow footpath through the inclosed land.

They could not but watch her as she walked very swiftly over the brown, bare fields. But what comfort could they give her? They could not restore the dear face, the voice, the heart that had wrapped her in its love. They could not lighten that sense of utter desolation which had come to her when all was over, and she stood astonished and smitten upon a threshold she could not pass.

Riding slowly and talking sadly, the hunting party separated. There is in death a sovereign dignity, the solemnity of a life concluded; and however they had felt toward Graeme living, the man dead, inspired in every breast a strange sentiment of respect. Had he not gone forth on a passage full of mysteries, a passage which they also should one day tread?

CHAPTER XV.

AT FAITH'S MERCY.

“ In her sheltered home
Dwelt Peace and Charity, and Joy became
A frequent guest, and loved to sit with her
And make her sing. Yet pitiful she was
To all who suffered, measuring loss and woe
By the large measure of her own deep heart,
And by the vastness of its treasure.”

WHEN the heart is brimful of grief it must be held very still, and in the days following Lord Graeme's death, Faith instinctively preserved this attitude. To have wept, or given way to audible lamentation, would have been to make shipwreck of self-control, and relinquish that dignity of grief which saved her the platitudes of sympathy, and the surrender of the least portion of her confidence.

During the week in which the body lay in Graeme Castle, her mental distress was very great. But she refused to see it again. Her farewell had been taken. Her beloved had crossed the great border land with her words

of hope in his ears, and her kisses upon his lips. Her last memory of him was one which death's erasing fingers had not touched, and she did not wish any other to supplant it. The custom of her native country saved her from the ordeal of the funeral. David and Matthew walked with Lord Seaton as chief mourners, and most sincere mourners they were. "It was his last request to me," said Lord Seaton to Faith. 'See that David and Matthew Graeme are the chief followers at my burial.' Those were his words, and I promised him, for he loved the lads;" and Faith bowed her head, and was satisfied it should be so.

But Terres was angry at the arrangement, and Lord Seaton, though he insisted on the carrying out of the promise made to the dead, was much annoyed. Besides, there was some vague wonder among the neighboring gentry; a floating suspicion in their minds, which yet they scarcely cared to whisper to each other, so charged was it with obligation to the living and blame to the dead.

The principal rooms in the castle were hung with black cloth for the occasion, and it would be

hard to conceive of a dwelling more profoundly melancholy and forlorn. The servants would not move about it, except in couples; the visitors, in spite of the large fires, were cold. A sudden, irresistible depression, a trembling mortal terror, assailed every one who came into the lonely rooms. There was something terrible to the boys in this pomp of black velvet and black cloth—in the still face, so awfully white, that was the only object above the heavy pall, the one pitiful cause of the black floor, and the black walls, and the black draperies. Faith was glad she had not so seen it. Far better to remember it under the open sky, out in the wide fields, with the sympathy of nature, and the sympathy of its mortal kind regarding it.

Still as long as the body lay there, Faith felt that she might give so long to her own sorrow. There would be no necessity to consider what duty she owed her nephews in this crisis, until after the burial. Lord Seaton was the nearest male relative capable of taking upon his shoulders the ponderous ceremonies considered proper for a man of noble birth, who had also held local and social positions of

trust and eminence. When the last rites had been fully paid, then she would see Terres.

It was said that Lady Seaton was very ill, and she could well believe it. The affection between the brother and sister had been one of exceptional intensity. Terres mourned bitterly, and for many weeks refused every suggestion of comfort or resignation. It seemed cruel in the sharpness of such heart-sorrow to bring to her remembrance the worst side of her brother's character, and force her to contemplate the sin they had committed together.

Faith also was for some weeks physically averse to the dispute. A languor, a sadness of sorrow, that preferred inaction and silence, had in a measure subdued her. After the boys went to Eton, her life lost its savor. Terrible temptations assail even truly good women when they sit down on the edge of the tomb. It is there the great enemy is to be most feared. He said to Faith, "God has taken the only one who truly loved you away—He need not have done so. He took him cruelly and without warning. He need not have done so. Will you ever see him again? In what form, and in what region? Will he love you then?

And in ten, or twenty years, are you even sure that you will love him?" Oh, yes! it is generally the strongest souls that have these pallid despondencies, these spiritual negations, nigh hand to annihilation.

But with Faith it was only a passing condition. Children always turn to the light, and Faith had a child's soul. Ere long she turned to the celestial horizons, to infinite serenities, to love without end or limit. For her soul had never doubted. It believed as her body breathed, as naturally and as unconsciously. It had no need to discuss its faith. It is the simplest who see the clearest.

Phemie had watched her grief with a wise and patient understanding; knowing by some fine womanly instinct when to leave her in solitude, when to call her perforce into the struggle of life. She was glad that the spring opened early; that even in February there were a few young lambs to be looked after. Then Faith roused herself to her duty. She was again constantly on the hills; but there were few of the valleys, or the high places, not full of the memories of her little brother David, of her nephews, and of Graeme.

She could not but remember ; and she would have been pitifully lonely, had not one of the dogs taken a singular affection for her. Laddie was a noble collie who knew every sheep she owned, and whose sagacity had saved many a flock. During that very winter he had perceived the approach of a snow-storm while the shepherds were at kirk, and without orders driven a thousand sheep into the nearest shelter. When Faith began to look after the lambs again, he positively attached himself to her. With eyes full of unspeakable affection—in which she asserted she often saw a mist like tears, and even the whole understanding of her great loss—he quietly watched her. And she grew familiar with the wise and loving creature, and often in her lonely walks talked to him.

“I hae the heartache, Laddie ;” and Laddie would look into her face with a sympathy that both understood. When she sat down upon the little knoll that had been a favorite resting-place for Graeme and herself, Laddie lay down gently beside her, and they had their own sad confidences. And the fine healthful walks, the caring for helpless creatures, and the confiding

comfort of her dumb friend soon restored Faith. She began to write longer letters to her boys, to take her old vivid interest in all that concerned them, to plan for their holidays, and count away the weeks of their absence.

In the month of May she heard that Lady Seaton had returned to the Court. A severe illness had followed her brother's death, and it had been thought necessary to take her to the south of France for the winter. At the time she left, Faith was not sorry that her absence should leave her some time to consider the best and kindest way in which to open a subject so painful to both. That it had to be discussed, there was no doubt. Lord Seaton had applied for power to control the Graeme estate on behalf of his son's right in it. The child was everywhere spoken of as lord of Seaton and Graeme; and in spite of her sympathy for Terres, and her liking for the babe, Faith felt a sentiment of anger at it. For though Lord Graeme, in his confession to her, had never named, nor blamed his sister; in subsequent necessary conversations, he had been compelled to reluctantly admit that Lady Seaton was

aware of the wrong, and would surely endeavor to take advantage of it for her son.

So, after her return, there was a feeling of strait in Faith's mind, a determination to do right, but to do it as kindly as possible, for the sake of one so dear to all concerned. She selected a morning of perfect loveliness for her mission, and she went early after breakfast, because Lord Seaton was then generally in the saddle going over the estates.

Terres received her very coolly. She was not aware that her brother had made any confession. She had been hurt and scandalized by his defiance of conventional forms in entreating for Faith's presence in his dying moments; and also very much offended by Faith's ready compliance with his wish. She felt that her own claim ought to have been remembered first. People had talked, and Terres hated having her family affairs talked about. Moreover, the meeting amid such a crowd of witnesses prevented her quietly smiling away any presumptions that Lord Graeme ever really intended to marry the shepherdess of Harribee. She was now, also, a very great and rich lady. If Faith had shown her some civilities in the past, she considered

that she had amply returned them. She was quite determined that the acquaintance should be dropped, and she received Faith in a manner consonant with this resolve.

“I hope you are better, Lady Seaton?”

“I am well. And you?”

“I am well also. How is the child?”

She touched a bell, and ordered his lordship to be brought in. He was a pretty boy, and Faith noticed that his apron was ornamented on the bosom with the united crests of Seaton and Graeme. She looked at it, and was silent a moment. Then she said, “Come with me, my lady, where we can be quite alone. I have some words to speak to you to-day.”

Terres laughed a little scornfully, but there was a sudden fear in her heart. She led Faith to her bedroom, and closing the door, said: “Pray what secret have you to tell me now, Miss Harribee?”

“Have you not a secret to tell me?”

“Certainly not.”

“Will it be any secret if I tell you that the baby we have just left is Lord o’ Seaton, but is not Lord o’ Graeme?”

Her face blazed, she snapped the gold chain

she was fingering in two, as she answered, "Understand that you can not impose upon me with any old rubbish about private marriages—"

"There was no private marriage in the case of your brother William Graeme and Beatrice Spezia. It was a public marriage, well attested, and my sister's husband was his lawful son."

"Proofs! Proofs! What do I care for your assertion? It is not worth the breath you make it with."

"I have the proofs. Your brother—"

"Do not name him. How dare you name him to me?"

"'Dare' is a word not to be used to a Haribee, man or woman. Your brother Tilbert was my promised husband."

"You say so."

"It is true."

"Then you intended to marry him for his title. If you could have been Lady Graeme yourself, little you would have cared about the right or the wrong of it."

"Of all trifles, titles are the very lightest. In my condition I stand upon my ain feet, not needing in any way to lean upon the great. If

I had married your brother I would hae married him only as Tilbert Graeme. I intended to go abroad until the time to right the wrong had come."

"Oh, indeed! So that was Tilbert's and your fine plan! Heaven very wisely defeated it."

"I didna come here to talk o' the dead, but o' the living. I hae the certificate o' your brother William's marriage. I hae also the baptismal certificate of the late Lord Roland Graeme. And I hae a written confession which I hope and trust you willna force me to use. Unless it is used, the world need never ken whether the wrong was intentional, or a mistake. Sandy Todd kens that I hae been making inquiries, there is nane need ever know mair than that the right has come to light through me. Lady Seaton, I hae nae desire to give you or yours a moment's annoyance. Help me to do what I must do, as easily as possible."

"My poor little boy! He is to be made a pauper for those two big nephews of yours."

Then she began to weep bitterly, and Faith sat down silent and grieved, but she offered her

no consolation. After a while, Terres dried her eyes and asked, "Why do you wish to alter what is so suitably settled?"

"For you, suitably settled, perhaps; for my nephews?"

"If they want money, how much will satisfy you? I will sell my jewels. I will give you all I have."

"All you have is too little. It is not money I care for. If all the world were mine, I could be no other than I am. No whit gladder, no whit prouder. I live quietly in my own home, out of the noise of the world; fearing none but God; desiring naething but the right."

"Then why molest my little Piers?"

"Canna you see that it would be wrong to let Piers Seaton enjoy what is truly David Graeme's?"

"If David were willing! Can you not manage David? I will give him money."

"Do you really hope to make me a partner in your sin? If David could be bought, that would not touch Matthew's right o' succession."

"Oh, Faith! Faith, then have pity on me. If Seaton knows the truth, he will cast me

off forever. The circumstances must come before the Lord Chancellor. They will be in all the newspapers. Every body will be discussing them; supposing this, and suspecting that. It would be torture to Seaton, who is the proudest and most honorable of men. He will insist on paying all the back rentals. It would ruin us. When he is aware that I have even sanctioned Tilbert's action, he will despise me. I can fancy the look he will give me. I do not think he will ever speak to me again. And my poor boy! Oh, Faith! Oh Faith! have some mercy on me!"

Faith's answer came slowly and with a sense of great effort, as if she were yielding conscience to circumstances and justice to mercy.

"Lady Seaton."

"Call me Terres; call me sister."

"Na, na! I will be your friend, but I will pull no fence down between us. Lady Seaton, it would be a wicked thing to put strife between you and your lord, without great and good reason. Wait a wee. We hae a border saying, and a gude one it is—*Our kindred first*—I must not wrong the boys, but there is nae spe-

cial call to right them just now. Every year brings it's ain changes. When David is twenty-one wha kens which of us a' will be in the land o' the living?"

"Will you leave the subject until then?"

"Yes, I will."

"Are you sure?"

"I hae the mastery o' myself."

"But will you not be going to Sandy Todd, or others for advice?"

"In this matter, I sall fetch my counsel from my ain breast."

Then amid her thanks and tears she began to blame her brother. "She could not tell how he had been so cruel. It was pure selfishness in him, Faith," she said passionately. "He wanted you. He thought by confessing himself a villain and affecting to be ashamed of it in your presence, he would touch your vanity, and win you. He cared nothing for my honor, or my child's."

"My lady, I will hear na mair from you. You hae a poor sense o' honor to get a word o' mercy from me, and then take out your mortification on ane that isna here to shut your mouth with the truth. It is a pitiful thing to

hear you ! Dinna you ken that to abuse the dead, is to rob their ghosts o' their winding sheets ? ”

“ Don't get into a passion, Faith Harribee. ’

“ Passion ! I'm nae in any passion. I hae made you a promise that cost me something to make. I wish that you had the grace to take it in a kindly spirit. ”

“ O, forgive me ! forgive me ! I am beside myself with shame and fear and disappointment. I did not think Tilbert would have told any one. It is too bad ! How could he be so wicked ? He was not sick, nor going to die, nor expecting any great calamity. Faith, how could you come here with such dreadful news ? ”

Faith rose very patiently. She perceived that at present her influence could do no good. Terres had one of those natures that are wisely reprimanded ; fatiguing, full of incoherence, full of contradictions. In dealing with her, it was continually necessary to begin anew ; and the most forbearing weary of conversations which arrive at no conclusions.

“ I shall go abroad, Faith Harribee. Can I trust you ? ”

“ You have my promise. If I live, I sall say

nae mair until David is of age. If I die, the prosecution of the claim will rest with others."

"Prosecution! For heaven's sake choose your words better. If you do tell before the time named, I shall kill myself."

"I am not to be frightened in any way, Lady Seaton. I am going awa' now and you needna be sobbing that gate. It will do you nae gude, and be vera sure I sall do you nae ill."

It had not been in any sense a satisfactory visit; and it left upon Faith's mind a sense of uncertainty that was exceedingly painful. A week after it she heard that Lady Seaton had gone to Italy. Seaton and Graeme were in the hands of factors; both houses were closed, and in a few months the simple folk around them ceased to talk of their doings, or even speculate as to their return.

So summers and winters came and went, and there were few changes in Harribee. Faith aged some what after Graeme's death, She had stood on the topmost line of youth and beauty longer than most women do. Her open air life, her freedom from great cares, her placid cheerful temper and her religious trust exercised a preserving charm. But when love went

out of life forever, it made a change that all noted. It had been meridian for long with her: suddenly it was the afternoon of life.

But she never lacked work, and never lacked interests outside her work. It was not enough for her to be making money; above all she must be making happiness. And wisely, she looked for her opportunities at her own hearth, and among the people with whom she was connected. She talked with her shepherds, and when she discovered that a few pounds to furnish a cottage would make a couple of young hearts happy, the cottage was furnished. She sent young girls off to service with kists full of warm and suitable clothing. She could always spare a few sovereigns to keep old men and old women out of the fields in the winter time. She discovered among her herdsmen a born preacher, and she sent him to school and to college, and had the felicity to know that he became a great apostle. Her charity was universal; developing every hour into little unremembered deeds of kindness, of which none took much note; which would never win a word of public recognition, and yet which were

worth far more than much that obtains public recognition.

When David was nineteen, she took the boys one summer morning up the fell with her. They climbed as high as the preacher's stone, and looked over the beautiful land rolling away to the horizon beneath them. Faith was thinking of the future, but insensibly they fell into conversation about the past. In his slow, thoughtful way, as he let his eyes wander over the Harribee fells, Matthew said, "I do wish I had borne the grand old name, I should have been proud of it."

Faith looked eagerly at him, and then turned to David—"would you also like to be called Harribee, David?" she asked.

"It is a good name, Aunt Faith, and I am glad of my share in it. But I have nothing against my father's name. I know that he was neither a martyr nor a saint, that he was only a poor player, but he did his work cheerfully and well. He was kind and honest and much loved. No, I would prefer to remain David Graeme. But I would gladly take down the sword of Elias Harribee and

have a commission in the Cameronian Regiment.

“Sae you sall, David! Sae you sall! The sword o’ Elias Harribee isna for this day’s fighting, but you sall hae your ain sword, and your ain company if you would really like it.”

“Yes, I would really like it.”

“I am proud o’ your choice, David. Now, Matthew, tell us what you would like best to be.”

“I will be a Cameronian also, Aunt Faith; but I would rather go into the kirk than the army.”

“Then I am a happy woman this day. And now you shall baith go to Edinburgh, and hae every chance for your future that love and siller can give you, but I want you baith to ken, that I hae none but you twa, and that I am a rich woman, and can gie you every desire of your hearts—I mean every wise one—not that I hae money for wastrie, for I havena, but there is enough in Harribee and Hawick for a’ things reasonable.”

“And I call that riches, Aunt Faith,” said David; “for what says the dearest singer in all the world?

• It's no in titles nor in rank,
It's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
 To purchase peace or rest;
It's no in making muckle mair,
It's no in books: it's no in lear,
 To make us truly blest;
If happiness have not her seat,
 And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
 But never can be blest. ' "

“Are you sure that is a bit o' Robert Burns?
Our Kirk doesna think weel o' him, but there's
nae thing wrong in thae words. Your grand-
fayther used to say, that folks who sang,
frighted trouble awa' from them, but he, puir
laddie! supped his cupful. I hae often felt
sorry for him, puir lad! Puir, foolish, kindly
lad!”

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CAPTAIN AND THE MINISTER.

“ Dear youths, gray books no blossoms bear ;
You have enough of learning ;
For life’s green fields your march prepare,
And take a friendly warning.
I would not have you longer stay
To read of others’ striving ;
Wield your own arm !—the only way
To know life is by living.”

—PROF. BLACKIE.

THERE are experiences, after which we never more take life in the same way ; never more are what we were before them. The death of Graeme was such a crisis to Faith ; after it, age began to touch her gently, now and then, and here and there. She held the world with a looser grip. She had turned her face to the west. But life has always compensations, and no one who saw Faith’s happy face, could doubt that she felt hers to be sufficient.

As the time of the boys’ majority drew near, she was often thoughtful, and she began

to talk of taking a journey to Edinburgh. Phemie was fretted at her restlessness,—“if you’ll hae patience, Faith,” she said, “the gude that is for you will come to you. The laddies be to finish their classes, and you going to Edinburgh willna hurry the hour by a moment.”

“I ken what for, I’m going, Phemie.”

Phemie had become very helpless. She sat most of her time in the chimney corner, or in the sunny doorway, with her knitting in her hand, and the ball of yarn moving softly at her feet.

“Her work was done,” she said; “she was wearying to hear God’s voice, for she kent weel, there would be mair wark, and better wark laid out for her over-by.”

Faith hesitated about leaving her, but finally one lovely morning in June, she came down stairs dressed for a journey. Before going she went to her father’s desk, and took out of an unlocked drawer, a ring. She had been quite aware of its presence in that drawer almost all her life, but until lately had never felt any particular interest in it. When she reached Edinburgh, she did not go at once to her nephew’s

lodgings, but. to a splendid mansion in the suburbs of the city.

“I hae heard tell, that the Duke of Lauderdale is staying here,” she said to the footman. “If sae, tell him there is ane that would hae speech with him.”

After some delay she was admitted to his presence. He was a very old man, and he peered curiously at Faith as she advanced toward him. But Faith was in no ways embarrassed. She bowed courteously and presented to him the ring, saying,

“Your Grace nae doubt remembers the token between yourself and my fayther; and the promise given with the pledge.”

He looked earnestly at the ring a moment, and answered: “I do indeed! Madame, is my preserver Matthew Harribee still living?”

“He was ta'en up higher, many a year syne. I am his daughter Faith. Can I claim the promise in his place?”

“On this ring you may claim all I can do for you.”

“My fayther's name is like to perish on Esk Water. I, alone, am left of the Harribees. But I hae twa nephews called Graeme, and ane

o' them, a pious, learned lad, wishes to take the name o' Harribee. Can you get this favor for him, and for me, duke?"

"It is but a small favor. It were indeed a pity if so noble a strain lost their name in Eskdale. You may consider the request granted. Give me the address of your lawyer. All business connected with the matter can be transacted through him. It will spare you some troublesome writing."

"Put down Sandy Todd of Hawick. He kens a' anent our business and our family."

"As to the other young man? Have you any request to make for him?"

"He is aye talking of a captain's commission in his fore-elders' regiment, the Cameronians."

"And he must have it, madame. You will permit me to use my influence."

"The siller for it is lying with Sandy Todd; but I ken that siller is but a part o' the business. If you will say the gude word, and the strong word, you can sae weel say, I will thank you, duke."

"And you must take back this ring. I ask that the young soldier keep it. Tell him that

it has been worn by the dukes of Lauderdale since the days of the third James. I do not doubt but that he will wear it with honor." Then smiling pleasantly in Faith's face, he added, "do you know the value of the ring?"

"I ken naething anent jewels, duke ; but I am vera sure that nae siller at a' could buy it now from the lad wha is to wear it."

"I am pleased to hear you say that ; yet, if a question of sale should ever rise, the Duke of Lauderdale will always give one thousand pounds for it. The ruby is the finest in Scotland—and it has associations—associations !"

"It will be a sair strait—a strait o' life and death, that will make any kin o'mine turn faith and kindness into just common sovereigns."

"Give me your hand, Miss Harribee. Late as the call upon me is—and you see I am in the gloaming of life—I am proud to answer it."

So they parted, and Faith said nothing as to the 'wherefore' of her journey to any one but Sandy Todd, and he took what information she chose to give him with a satisfactory indifference.

"You are a wise woman and a lucky woman," he said, "and I hope you can leave

your luck wi' your siller for them as are to come after you."

"The blessing is to the third and fourth generation, Sandy, and it will be renewed ere it runs out; I dare hope that, too. The lads are baith wise-like, and Matthew is heart-pious, and seeking, as you ken, the way into the holy office."

In June the young men returned home. They had both done more than well, and Faith was very proud of the honors they had achieved. Then for a few weeks she gave herself up to the enjoyment of their presence. "We will speak o' the future, dear lads," she said, "when you hae rested brain and body a wee. Gae up to the hill-tops and breathe the airs o' heaven, and talk wi' the shepherds, for they hae seen wonderful things in the mountains, and eat, and sleep, and grow strong for whate'er work is before you. And when the right hour strikes I sall hae something to say to you baith."

Not one of them seemed inclined to hurry the right hour. In this green valley the days came to them full of peace. It was a summer holiday, charmful and restful, the very labors

of which were as the singing and playing of a pastoral idyll.

But one September morning a stranger came to see Faith. He was an agent of the Duke of Lauderdale, and he left with her papers which she regarded as David and Matthew's call to the real work of life. She held them in her hands, with a heart subdued to grateful tears and yet throbbing with high and holy hopes.

As she sat musing, David put his head into the room. "Come up the fells, Aunt Faith," he said, "Laddie is sick for a run, and I think I never saw such a glorious haze over the heather. It looks as if we might manage to catch some of it in our hands."

"I will go wi' you, David gladly. Is that you, Laddie? Come awa' baith o' you."

What a rarefied freshness there was in the air! How full it was of passing aromas, and of wandering sounds, that in the wide expanse lost themselves, ere one could tell whence they rose, or where they died away. Faith walked slower. She had grown paler and more slender; but her eyes were as young as they were at twenty, and her smile was not an inadver-

tent one; it was a blending of such freshness, such sweet graciousness and benignant love, as filled the receiver with an instantaneous joy.

Nothing was said until they reached a great boulder on the summit of the first fell. Here they sat down to rest. The place was misty with blue bells, and the grass was vividly green, for a little beck went tumbling past, and with clear gurglings and limpid whispers spread freshness all around. There, in that sweet loneliness, she gave David the duke's ring and message, and put into his hand his commission in the Cameronians.

Destiny loves surprises, and David took his with that joyful enthusiasm which belongs alas! only to youth. The imposing military paper, the sparkling jewel; he looked from one to the other with a wondering delight, that was only equaled by the joy and satisfaction in Faith's own heart.

"I didna ken, David," she said, touching the ring, "that I was leaving a thousand pounds lying round sae careless like. It has been a' these years in your grandfayther's open desk. I am vera sure he didna ken its worth either, or he had turned the lock on it."

“Why did the duke give it to grandfather?”

“It was weel deserved, nae doubt o’ that, though I ne’er heard the particulars—Matthew Harribee wasna the man to praise his ain deeds—but he saved the duke’s life during the reform riots in Glasgow, and I hae heard my mother say it was a deed beyond ordinary for its daring and courage. Now then, Captain Graeme, gie me your young, strong arm and we will tak’ the way hame again, for I hae some words also to speak to your brother, Matthew.”

They found Matthew in the garden. It was all ablaze with dahlias and hollyhocks, and he stood with a book in his hand, leaning upon the stone-wall.

“What are you reading, Matthew?”

“Nothing, at present, aunt. It is a volume of sermons by Dr. Chalmers upon the glory of the firmament above us, but I was not reading it. I was looking over the glory of this fair land. The barley is ready for the sickle. You will be harvesting soon?”

“Next week we begin the ingathering.”

“The Harribees chose a fair bit of earth for themselves, Aunt Faith.”

“I am right glad you think sae, Matthew;

for from this day, their name and their house and their land is yours. You are now Matthew Harribee and your name makes you heritor of a' that goes with the name."

Faith had worked for this hour, and dreamed of this hour for many a year, and it did not disappoint her. It was a wonderful day to all! In the sweet garden how short was that summer afternoon! And when the first wonder and surprise was over, what enthralling talks they had of those who would have been so glad in their joy!

Faith spoke with pride and tenderness to them of their grandparents—the sturdy sense and piety of Matthew Harribee, the sweet gentleness of his wife. She told them of their uncle David and his shattered little life. She encouraged their own reminiscences of their never-forgotten home. She added her memories of the sweet and childlike Agnes. She listened with interest to their stories of their gay, kindly father. She even suffered herself to trust that there might be a hope for one who had been such a loving husband and father, and such a generous helper of his poorer brethren. "There is nae limit," she whispered, "to God's

power and 'the secret o' God' is doubtless a secret o' mercy." Nor did they forget the uncle who had died so suddenly and who had added so much to their boyhood's happiness. They talked long of him, recalling incident after incident with affectionate pride, and Faith listened silently with unvoiced prayers and tear-dimmed eyes.

The next day Matthew had found a difficulty and he came to Faith with it. "Aunt, if I am to be Harribee of Harribee Home, what comes of the grander hopes that both of us have had? I shall soon be a preacher of the word, and I truly think that I have a call to preach which I dare not disobey."

"Oh, Matthew! Are you sae faithless to me? Did you really think I had forgotten that? Why, man! the siller has been gatherin' in Hawick bank—the siller that is to build your kirk—for many a year. There is a remnant of the grand old faith scattered through these hills and dales—just a few sheep in the wilderness, Matthew—but you shall be their shepherd and feed them with the strong meat o' the word. They are mostly poor daytal laboring men, and they can spare little o' their substance, but what

then? The farm shall be your manse, and the sheep and the grain are for your stipend. This has been my prayer and my hope for long, and if you will take your call from me, you are a placed minister as soon as your license is in your hands."

So there was a solemn compact between these two, and henceforward there was a higher purpose in Faith's labor and just a touch of greater dignity in her manner. Never afterward were the boys any thing in Harribee household, but the minister and the captain, and it was a high offense in Faith's eyes to omit these honorable titles.

Soon after this momentous day Faith was again alone. Captain Graeme joined his regiment at Stirling, and Matthew went to Edinburgh to take the last steps toward the office he was to fill. In December David would attain his majority. In December the question of the Graeme succession would have to be decided.

Early in the month Lady Seaton returned home. Her son, a bright handsome lad, with his mother's haughty manner, called at Harribee with a letter for Faith. He was superbly mounted and attended by a groom in livery;

and he had doubtless received some charges which made him as conciliating as possible. The sight of the child saddened Faith. After his visit she could not eat, nor sleep of nights. If it were only possible to pass by the affair and leave all as it was! She told herself that David had his commission and was proud and happy in the duties it brought him, and that also, he was to be the heir of the large sum of money she had saved: "For Matthew will hae the house, and the land, and the kirk forbye, and I will give David every penny in Hawick and elsewhere. Isna that better than the auld castle, and the auld name that hasna a noble deed to season it? And what for will I tell him then? Maybe, I will only set him up and ruin him!"

But this specious reasoning did not satisfy her. At the last she always came to the same conclusion: "I must do the right thing. That is my duty. The consequences, I hae naething to say anent. They are in God's hands."

She did not at once answer Terres' request to see her. "What for should I go at her beck and call?" she asked herself with a touch of reasonable pride. "Phemie is mair to me than

she is, and Phemie I dinna care to leave her lane."

But when four days had passed Terres grew uneasy. She humbled her pride and went to call upon Faith. She was now over fifty years of age. She had grown stout and lost every trace of her youthful beauty and fine carriage. Her face shewed plainly the marks of evil passions willingly indulged; and it was a great effort for her to meet Faith with any show of courtesy or kindness.

"Why did you not answer my letter Miss Harribee?"

"I wasna minded to, my lady. I had nae new thing to say. The time I had spoken of hadna come."

"But I wished to see you."

"I dinna think it, Lady Seaton. And I wasna caring to see you. You said things vera hard to hear at our last meeting."

"I did not suppose you would bear malice. I though Christians were told to forgive."

"Likewise they are told to keep out o' the way o' temptation. I said harder words mysel' that day, than is my ordinar. I didna want to hae to say them again."

“You are not very polite, but that is neither here nor there. What are you going to do about Graeme?”

“Naething. I sall leave it to the heir himself to do what he thinks right in the matter. He is a wise and kind lad; and he has a gude heart. I am not feared for him doing right.”

“I hear that he is joined the army. That looks as if he did not mean to make any claim.”

“He doesna yet ken that he has any claim to make. I thocht if he had a few weeks in barracks, he would be mair able to decide on which life would suit him better—lord o’ yonder dreary castle, or lord o’ his ain sword and fortune. I sall not say this nor that, to waver him.”

“It is not right to leave so important a question to a silly young man in the first flush of his military pride and social life. The very title will decide him.”

“He isna a silly young man; and I dinna think he will care a snap o’ his fingers for the auld world title. It is o’er blood-stained.”

“Yet you would have taken it.”

“You’ll no say them words again Lady Seaton. I hae told you different, and you

ken better. I am thinking you would be wiser to keep ill words in your ain heart. Why came you here? I didna send for you."

"I am always doing and saying the wrong thing. What did you think of my boy? Saw you ever a nobler looking child?"

"I thought he was a fine laddie."

"Oh how can you injure him, Faith?"

"Dinna tak' my Christian name up. There is nae kindness in the uptak."

"I think you are very rude, Miss Harribee."

"You should hae keepit awa'. I hae been vera patient with you, for the sake o' one not to be named between us. I hae done you nae harm. I hae wished you nane."

"What are you going to do this month?"

"Naething, just naething. David is auld enough, and wise enough to sort his ain affairs. Whate'er he does, I sall stand by."

"You are a cruel woman! Look at my boy—"

"Remember young Roland Graeme, and dinna talk to me o' cruelty! Dinna bid me mind the past, or I sall be hot to make the present pay for the past. Gae your ways lady Seaton, I will not speak mair words on this

subject with you ; but if in any other way I can be friend or helper, you hae claims on me, and I'll ne'er deny them."

So indeterminate, so full of resentful humiliation was this visit, that both women deeply regretted it. It only made Terres still more miserable. It decided Faith to send at once for her nephews. Both were a little startled at her urgent demand.

"If it be possible," she wrote to each, "if it be at all possible reach Harribee on the morning of the twenty-seventh of December. I have most important affairs for you to decide upon."

CHAPTER XVII.

CONTENT.

“ Having reaped and garnered, bring the plow
And draw new furrows 'neath the healthy morn,
And plant the great Hereafter in this Now,”

* * * * *

“ Her soul was stirring gently, as a bird
Stirs in its nest, about to take its flight
To brighter lands.”

“ The bitterness of Death behind her lies,
And not before. Henceforth shall mysteries
Of heavenly love be with her from the lands
Of light.”

MATTHEW reached Harribee on the twenty-sixth, David not until the noon hour of the twenty-seventh. He was in his uniform, and Faith thought she had never seen a lordlier looking youth. Phemie watched him with speechless admiration. There was not a servant on the farm who had not a hearty pride in this revelation of military splendor and authority. It was the one form of power which they had an instinctive admiration for, and yet were unfamiliar with.

In the moment of his arrival he understood that he had been summoned for some very important reason. Faith was white with emotion, her hands trembled, her voice was full of tears, as she led the young men to the best parlor, which had been opened and warmed for this interview.

They sat down together at a table on which the family Bible was lying, Faith facing her nephews. After a moment's pause, she said :

“ My dear lads, you hae come to the gravest hour o’ your lives.” Then with a pathetic seriousness she told them the long sad story of sin and remorse. At first she had not intended to compromise Lord Graeme, but as she spoke she forgot every thing but the truth ; and in the light of truth, the man’s contrition and atonement seemed to her grand enough to cancel his fault. At this point she faltered and broke down ; and the young men drew close to her, and soothed her with gentle words and assurances, and more than all, with outspoken praises of the one who had wronged them. It was a sorrowful, shameful tale to tell, and Faith suffered almost as much as if she had been the wrong-doer. But when it was told, she looked

straight into David's and Matthew's faces, and that look gave her an instant sense of sympathy and relief.

"I hope you dinna think I hae done wrong to you, in keeping back the news."

"You have acted wisely and kindly, Aunt Faith," said David. "Even a year ago, I might have been tempted to decide as I would scorn to decide now. As far as I am concerned, I will do as my brave-hearted father did, make my own living, and carve my own name. I have been among lords in Edinburgh and Stirling. I think little of them. What honor is there in the name a dead man won? I will only have the title which I can win for myself."

Faith looked proudly at him, and then glanced at Matthew, who sat with eyes downcast upon the table. "Matthew," she said, "you are next heir to David; if David should die and leave no son, you would be lord of Graeme."

"I will not think of honor or increase that is to come by David's death."

"Those are but a few kind words, Matthew. You be to think of every side of this question

now ; you canna alter your decision in after years. Are you quite willing to give up such prospects as are yours in this matter ? If not, then David will have no power to resign a position which clasps your right as well as his own."

There were some minutes of intense silence. Matthew remained lost in thought. Faith and David both waited for his decision. They were neither astonished nor hurt by his delay. He was known to be careful and cautious even on the most ordinary subjects. Still he hesitated so long that David grew slightly impatient, and played nervously with the tassel on his sword hilt.

"I wanted to be sure, Aunt Faith: Sure, quite sure, David. No regrets afterward. Now I am ready to speak." He drew the Bible toward him, and laying his hand upon it, said:

"The thing that has been told me, shall be as if I had never heard it. I will have no part or lot in the lordship of Graeme. I will entertain no unkind thought of him who wronged my father. I believe that he was most truly penitent ; and I truly forgive him. I shall always

love him. I will, therefore, for his sake also, make no question which would give occasion for evil-speaking about him. This I say, and swear to, in God's presence, and on God's word."

Then David laid his hand upon the book. "Aunt Faith, all that Matthew has said, I say with him. I will have no part in Graeme lordship; and for your sake I will not have the name of one you loved made a talk and a by-word of. Let him rest in peace. I pray God to forgive him, as I do this hour."

"My dear lads, I thank you both. I thank you! I'll no deny but what the thocht of all that would be printed, and said, has many a time made me heart sick with fear. I must hae gone into this court and that court wi' my evidence; I must hae been questioned, and suspected, and had my most sacred feelings examined; I should hae been gazed at by folks, and thocht ill of, and had ill said of me, for the vera kindness there was between me and Lord Tilbert. Whichever way I turned I saw trouble, and the strife of tongues, and ill-will without end. I wouldna point this out to you before, lest you might put my gude name and peace o'

mind, before your ain wishes and welfare. But oh, my dear David; oh, my dear Matthew, you hae lifted a sair and heavy burden from my heart this day!"

"It was our great pleasure to do it; and now, aunt, what further steps must I take?"

"Here are all the papers necessary to certify your claim. This bundle contains the originals—this one, the copies I had made of the originals. I think you should call upon your aunt, Lady Seaton, at once, and tell her that you have decided to give up your right in favor of her son. You will find her haughty and insolent, I fear. Heed her not. What you have done has not been done for her pride, but for my gude name, and gude repose in my late days."

David rose at once. "I will go now. The sooner we can bury the subject forever, the better, dear aunt. And oh! how proud I am of your prudence, your kindness, and your wise love for me!" He put his handsome head down and kissed her fondly, and Matthew clasped her hands and said words just as loving and grateful.

Then Faith rose up with a bright face, and

she said, "to-day, I feel very proud and weel contented. Now I will go to my ain room. It is a sort of giving up o' my stewardship, and I canna be happy till I hae, also, God's 'well done.'"

Then the young men went to the stables together. David would ride at once to Seaton Court, and Matthew followed him full of a new idea which he could not well express for a moment or two. But as David was leaving the yard, he stopped him, and asked, "have you both packages of papers with you?"

"Yes; I have both."

"Let me keep the originals until you return. When you have had an interview with Lady Seaton, you will know better if it is wise to give her them. Remember, they are all we have to prove our father's honorable birth, and to defend our aunt against the innuendos, or the open charges, which defeated malice, or ungenerous obligation may choose to make. Take my advice, David."

"Very well, I will." Then he examined the papers, and gave Matthew the packet containing the original proofs.

At Seaton Court, Lady Seaton was watching

for his visit. She had contrived to send Lord Seaton to Graeme; she thought she was fully prepared for the very worst that could happen. When David was introduced to her presence, she met him with an air of painful interrogation, and as soon as the servant had retired, she said :

“Captain Graeme, there is no necessity for us to exchange empty compliments. You understand I know, that your claim clashes with the claim of my son?”

“It shall do so no longer, Lady Seaton. I have come to assure you of my unwillingness to disturb in any way the presumed succession. Not for all the lordships in Scotland would I have my aunt Faith’s name brought into public dispute, or her most pure motives misjudged. Nevertheless, my claim is a just one, as these papers will prove to you.”

She took them eagerly, glanced at their captions, and then turning rapidly round, flung them into the blazing fire. She was quite prepared to stand guard over their destruction, if necessary, but David made not the slightest attempt to rescue them. Still she saw when

she faced him again the wavering shadow of his contempt, and she answered it defiantly.

“No one has injured your aunt’s pure name. As for her pure motives, allow me to judge them as I please. Her influence over my brother was a sort of witchcraft. She could have made him write—or forge—any paper she wanted. Poor Tilbert! Ah! his death was a merciful one for himself!”

“Lady Seaton, I have one condition to make with you.”

“Sir, I will make no conditions with you—” and she laughed mockingly and looked at the filmy ash which was all that remained of the burnt papers.

“Then we will consider my relinquishment null and void. I can at least leave you to make conditions with the law.”

“You should have kept your proofs, sir.”

“I have kept them. The papers you burned were only copies of the originals. You can have another set from Sandy Todd.”

She started to her feet in a fury of passion, and David was compelled to hear silently her violent words. When she paused, he inquired,

“Will you listen to my condition, Lady Seaton?”

“What have you to say?”

“I insist that you shall neither by word or look insinuate or declare any thing likely to annoy my aunt, Miss Harribee. If you do, then I will reassert my right, and make her restitution of the most perfect kind. And though I may go far away from here, my brother stays in Harribee, and he will watch and listen, as I would watch and listen. So, then, Lady Seaton, beware of your words, and even of your looks, for I vow that you hold Graeme for your son on your own good behavior.”

“Oh, but you are an insolent cock-o-my-thumb! Your tongue proves you a Graeme, at any rate. How old is your sword, pray? A man who wears a sword ought to know that his first duty is courtesy to women. Pshaw! you show the clown’s blood, too.”

“Clown or gentleman, I have told you the truth. So long as you observe my condition, so long you may call your son Lord of Graeme. If you break it, though I be at the world’s end, I will come home and take my own.”

He did not wait for her answer, and without even a glance at the fuming woman he left the room. She was purple and panting with excitement, and yet amid all her anger, a fierce joy made her act with an unwomanly bravado of gayety. Her lord turned away from her noisy greeting with annoyance, and pleading unusual fatigue ordered a light dinner in his own room. And then the reaction came, and she threw herself with passionate tears by her son's bedside, and the boy was awakened by her sobbing and said petulantly, as she tried to kiss him :

"Oh, mamma ! I wish you would let me sleep ! You are so tiresome and so queer !"

"So tiresome and so queer ! And that was all her reward for wretched years—a husband, to whom she did not dare to trust the knowledge of her evil deed—a son who thought her irrepressible emotion tiresome and queer !"

In Harribee Home there was a very different scene. After a description of his interview with Lady Seaton—after Matthew had been praised for his wisdom, and the final disposition of the papers were arranged for, David and Matthew sat down with Faith for their evening meal. Phemie was in the chimney-corner, and David

himself put her cup by her side and gave her the few delicate morsels she could eat. It was perhaps the proudest moment of Phemie's life, and she looked with an adoring affection on the handsome young soldier.

The Seatons were put out of every one's thoughts. David had made himself familiar with the history of his famous regiment, and Faith and Matthew sat listening with glowing faces to the story of its doings in modern times—how it had fought under Preston in the American war, where its unfortunate Major André so sadly perished—how Lord John Elphinstone had led it on the plains of Egypt; and the border gentleman Maxwell through the horrors of Corunna, and how in China it had won the dragon that adorned its colors.

"They are braw, braw lads!" cried Faith proudly, "and I am weel pleased that my lad is ane o' them."

But it was a still prouder day when the little stone kirk was finished and the Rev. Matthew Haribee preached to a congregation of plain, thoughtful shepherds and farmers his first sermon. The ecclesiastical spirit of his race had culminated in Matthew Haribee. He was a

minister after these men's own hearts. The extremest doctrines of John Calvin were neither blinked nor clipped by him, and his flocks were fed, as Faith wished they should be, with the strong meat of the word. And Faith was a true woman. She liked a man whom she could honor and look up to, and in some measure obey; so Matthew, after his first sermon, was an indisputable authority to her.

Changes came with every year. First Phemie went peacefully away. Faith and Matthew sat with her through her last earthly night; and just before the great change came, Matthew asked, "How are you feeling now, Phemie?"

"Weel, vera weel, minister, just a bit confused with the flitting."

Then Matthew married a good, bonnie girl with both land and siller, and a new wing was built to Harribee; and the minister's study, and the pretty parlors and sleeping rooms were just a wonder to the simple shepherds.

But Faith did not grow to the changes that were as inevitable as the law of progress. As her old servants died off, she began to be aware that she was lonely in spite of the new ties trying to clasp her on every side. She loved

Matthew's boys and girls dearly, but not as she had loved Matthew himself, and his brother David. The tints of earth grew paler, its affections less potent. Spring was not so jocund, summer was not so brilliant, nor autumn so wealthy, nor winter so stimulating.

Still, if she had outgrown the vividness of her joys, she had also outlived the bitterness of every sorrow. Upon her lips, prayer and supplication had insensibly turned to praise. But such changes, sharply defined by a few words, were in reality hardly perceptible to those constantly around her. True, she went very seldom up the fells. She had less color in her cheeks, and more snow upon her hair, but these things were but natural symptoms of advancing age. Not even Matthew, or his wife Jean, noticed them particularly. And she never spoke of that singular feeling in her own heart—that feeling which all true workers have welcomed when their task was nearly done—that sense of pleasant weariness when the last chapter of the book is finished, the last touch added to the painting, the last acre cleared upon the farm—that fiat of accomplishment on any true labor,

which always brings the secret of the Master's approval.

One morning, just at that time when Englishmen were clamoring for an Abyssinian war, David suddenly appeared at Harribee. He had brought his own news, not having time to write. The Cameronians were under orders for the mystical old African land, and he was full of military ardor. If Faith loved either of her boys better than the other, it was David Graeme. His visit was the highest grace life could now give her. They had some hours of sweetest communion ; some short pilgrimages to all the spots upon the hills sacred to the memories of joys past over. And they drove as far as Graeme Castle and round by Seaton Court, and perhaps drew closer to each other, because they did not chatter away the emotions in their hearts. Indeed their conversation referring to the past was of the most fragmentary character, but it was sufficient for their peace and confidence.

"You have not regretted, David?" and Faith looked from the grey old castle into the young soldier's face.

"I have not had a moment's serious regret.

Remember what I have seen ; where I am now going ; the life of honorable labor and change I have had. You know the contrast. I have the better lot."

"When I am dead let Lady Seaton have the papers."

"If you wish it."

"Who can injure the dead ? and I forgive her."

"She might say evil of you."

"I shall be far beyond her power."

"It might annoy Matthew—"

"True. Then if Matthew is willing, give her the papers with a kind word from me."

"We will do what you wish, dear aunt."

When she bid David 'farewell,' she felt it to be her final one. In spite of every body's efforts, an irrepressible sadness pervaded the parting. Matthew thought it was in his brother. "I noticed a shadow on his face all the time, aunt. Does he regret what he resigned ?"

"Oh, no ! It is not that. The lad is bearing a sorrow vera few hearts escape. He has been deceived by his first love ; a bit silly lassie that left him for an earl auld enough to

be her fayther. But our David isna one to cry long after a false love. He kens weel, that our ain love is but a small part o' life. There is the love o' God and man. There is duty and honor, and honest work, and the saving o' honest siller. But my heart aches with his heart," she said softly, "it is a sair pain to thole while it lasts."

One July morning she received a letter from David. It was a very exciting one, full of adventures strange and wonderful as an Arabian tale. Her cheeks flushed and her eyes sparkled to its enthusiasm. She sat musing about it hour after hour, once or twice surprising every one by singing softly a verse or two of some old border ballad. In the afternoon she walked far up the hills, even to the Preacher's Stone, and came home weary, and yet with a singular gayety of spirits.

The baby—her own namesake—was sleeping in the cradle. She took her knitting and sat down beside it; and Matthew passing through the room noticed the stillness and happiness of her countenance. He did not speak to her, for he thought in his heart—"she is praying."

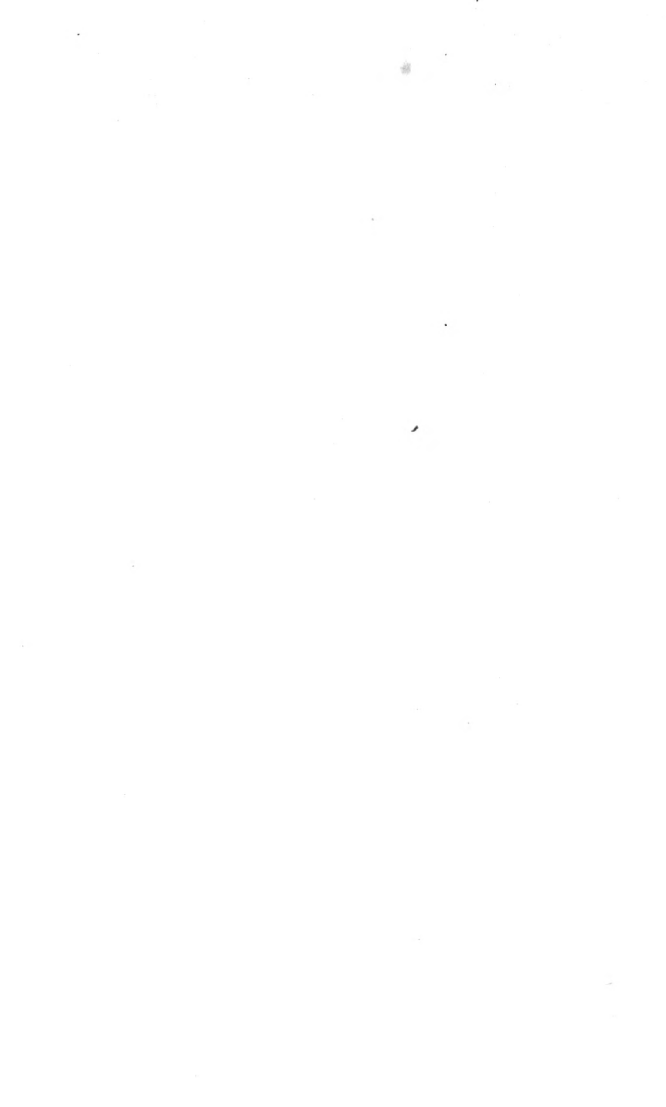
Thus, while her work was in her hands, ere

suffering or decay had touched her, "a word was brought to her. The King himself desired her presence." She went instantaneously without any consciousness of pain or parting. It was as if death had gently hastened her, "the King's command being urgent," and she, with that alert obedience she loved, had answered, "Lord, here am I."

They buried her among the generations of her own people in the kirk-yard on the fells. The great sycamores whisper above her grave and the steadfast hills are round about it, but

" Her soul, her body's guest
Is hence ascended, whither, neither Time,
Nor Faith, nor Hope, but only Love can climb."





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